# AN ESSAY Concerning the WEAKNESS OF *Human Understanding.*

By the late Monsieur *HUET*, Bishop of AVRANCHES.

Translated from the FRENCH,
By EDW. COMBE, A. M. late of *Mer. Coll. Oxon.*

The SECOND EDITION.

To which is added,
Monsieur *HUET*'s Dissertation,
Concerning *The Sublimity of the Style of the Holy Scriptures.* Translated by Mr. OZELL.

*LONDON:*
Printed for MATTHEW DE VARENNE, at *Seneca*'s *Head* in the *Strand.*
MDCCXXV.

BRITISH
290c64
MUSEUM

To the Right Honourable

# THOMAS,

## Lord *PARKER*,

Earl of *Macklesfield*, Lord High Chancellor of *Great-Britain*; &c.

My LORD,

THE following Diſſertation of a Prelate, when living not undeſervedly eſteem'd one of the moſt learned in *Europe* of

the Preſent Age, could not certainly have been ſubmitted to a more conſummate Judge, and generous Patron, of all uſeful Science, than Your Lordſhip.

There are many Teſtimonies of the Worth of other Works of the famous Mr. *Huet*, and the Merit of this; but I muſt not by forgetting the Reſpects due to the Dignity of Your Perſon, and high Station, incur the leaſt Hazard of being guilty of any Impertinence.

And only beg Leave to add, that the *Pyrrhonian* Epoche,

poche, and *Academick* Doctrine of the Art of doubting, abuſed by affected Ignorance, profane Prevarication, and libertine Pretences of Impiety, is here fully explained, if not eſtabliſhed; to improve Philoſophy, confirm Religion, and promote Obedience to human Laws: or I ſhould not have preſumed to lay it, in the *Engliſh* Idiom, at the Feet of the moſt excellent Guardian of ſacred Equity, and rightful Order, that ever adorned that weighty Province: and in which the longer You ſhall

be continued to shine, the more Glory You will reflect on the great Prince, who has so much Regard to the Welfare and Happiness of his Subjects.

*I am,*

*My* LORD,

*Your Lordship's*

*most Obedient*

*Humble Servant,*

*Merton Coll.*
*Oxon,* 1724.

Edw. Combe.

# ADVERTISEMENT
## OF THE
# BOOKSELLER.

THIS *Preſent I make to the Publick would have* appeared ſome *Time* ago, *if the illuſtrious Author who compoſed it, had been willing to let it ſee the Light. He was ſo apprehenſive his Sentiments of the Weakneſs of human Underſtanding would be diſliked by the Generality, that he could not prevail with Himſelf to publiſh it during his Life. He was ſatisfied with reading this Work to his beſt Friends, and not expoſe Himſelf to the Reſentment*

*of thoſe, be often called* the Vulgar *of the* Republick of Learning.

*A very worthy Perſon for whom the late Mr.* Huet *had much Reſpect, recommended this Work to Me, many Years before the Deceaſe of that learned Prelate. He tried in vain to procure me a Copy; Mr.* Huet *would not conſent, though he looked upon it as the beſt of all his Productions. Nothing more ſhews the Eſteem he had for it, than the Care he took to turn it into* Latin, *after he had compoſed it in* French, *which he did not do for any other of his Books. I have the* Latin *Verſion by me, and may publiſh it hereafter if deſired. All the World knows that this Prelate had cultivated* Latin *with extraordinary Application, and writ in that Language with as much Elegance.*

*After Mr.* Huet's *Death, one of his Relations to whom he entruſted his Manuſcript, was pleaſed to favour me with*

*with it, that the Publick might be no longer deprived of this excellent Treatiſe. But whereas it may be queſtioned by ſome whether the Author of the* Demonſtratio Evangelica, *was likewiſe the Author of a Work wherein* Pyrrhoniſm *is ſo ſtrenuouſly eſtabliſhed, it will be proper to declare here, that the latter is faithfully printed from the original Manuſcript of Mr.* Huet, *which I keep with Care, and am ready to produce to thoſe who ſhall have the Curioſity to examine it. I can the more eaſily verify, that the Manuſcript is of the* Prelate's *own Hand, becauſe I have many Letters of his writing with which he was pleaſed to honour me.*

*I have made no Alteration in it, but by placing the Name of Mr.* Huet, *in the Room of the ſuppoſed Name of* Theocritus of Pluvignack, Lord of Roch, Gentleman of Perigord, *under which he was for concealing Himſelf.*

*ſelf. Thoſe who love to know the true Authors of Books, will not be diſpleaſed with me for this Alteration.*

*The Work I publiſh was not unknown to the Editor of the* Huetiana, *which has lately appeared. For he informs us that the* Philoſophical Treatiſe of the Weakneſs of human Underſtanding *was compoſed by Mr.* Huet, *at the ſame Time as his* Quæſtiones Alnetanæ, *which appeared at* Caen *in* 1609.

*Some have deſired to ſee here the hiſtorical Elogy of this Prelate*; Mr. the Abbot d' Olivet, *known by his fine Tranſlation of* Cicero's Diſcourſes of the Nature of the Gods, *is the Author of it.*

*I ſhall conclude with a Remark which will pleaſe the Readers,* viz. *that the provincial Philoſopher, whoſe Perſon is borrowed by Mr.* Huet, *is the ſame Mr.* Cormiſy, *which he mentions in the Memoirs of his own Life.*

That

*That illuſtrious Scholar was Preſident of the Parliament of* Aix *in* Provence, *and baniſhed to* Caen *by Order of the Court. There that Magiſtrate became acquainted with Mr.* Huet, *and gave him a Taſte for* Sextus Empiricus, *and the Philoſophy of the* Scepticks. *The Place where the* Prelate *ſpeaks of Mr.* Cormiſy, *is at Page 229 of his Memoirs.*

Cadomum delatus eſt per eos Dies Vir literatus & priſcæ potiſſimum Philoſophiæ bene peritus, ſed & Morum præterea Comitate amabilis, omnique Elegantia excultus, Senatus Aguenſis, Præſes Cormiſius, illuc reflantis Fortunæ Invidia & Regis Juſſu relegatus. Attulit ille ad me Litteras commendatitias ab illuſtri Femina Catharina Vivonæa Rambullieta, jam ſuperiùs commemorata, quibus Viri prædicabat Laudes, meque enixè rogabat, ſi quomodo Hominis ſublevare poſſem Infor-

Infortunium, aut consolando, Patriæque Desiderium Dictis leniendo aut Afflictum Rebus ipsis juvando & assidua Consuetudine recreando, his Officiis ne deessem. Ad id autem etsi me satis impellebat ipsa Humanitas, multo tamen magis movebar ipsius Eruditione & Virtute, vel ex primo Congressu cognita. Frequens itaque illi aderam; nec ullus effluebat Dies, quin aut ille ventitaret ad me, aut illum ego convenirem, simulque vel per amæniſſimas Olenæ Ripas, vel per viridiſſima Prata deambularemus. Omnis enim ferè Sermo erat de veterum Philosophorum Sectis; quarum omnium cùm egregiè sciens erat, tum earum præcipuè, quæ Animum jubent ab omni Assensu sustinere. Summopere itaque comprobabat Sexti Empirici Doctrinam, effecitque Commendatione sua, ut Auctor adhuc de Nomine tan-

tantùm mihi cognitus pervolutaretur à me diligenter, mihique fieret perfamiliaris, & ſumma eſſet illius apud me commendatio.

AN

tantùm mihi cognitus pervolutare-
tur à me diligenter, mihique fierec
perfamiliaris, & summa effet illius
apud me commendatio.

# AN HISTORICAL ELOGY OF Mr. *HUET.*

PETER DANIEL HUET, ancient Biſhop of AVRANCHE, who died at PARIS the 26*th* of *January* 1721, was born at CAEN the 8*th* of *February* 1630. The Love of Study anticipated in him, we muſt not ſay altogether the Uſe of Reaſon, becauſe we are ignorant when that begins, but at leaſt the Uſe of Words. *I had* (*a*) *ſarcely*, ſays he,

(*a*) Huetiana, p. 3. Commentar. p. 16.

*left*

*left the Breaſt, but I envied thoſe I ſaw read.* He loſt his Father in eighteen Months; his Mother four Years after. He was put into the Hands of negligent Guardians, who boarded him in a mean School, where with little Aſſiſtance, and worſe Examples, he notwithſtanding finiſhed the Courſe of his Humanities, before he was thirteen compleat.

For his Philoſophy, he fell into the Care of an excellent (*b*) Profeſſor, who after the Manner of *Plato*, would have him begin by learning ſomewhat of Geometry. But the Scholar went farther than deſired. He took ſuch a Taſte for Geometry, that he made it his principal Study, and almoſt deſpiſed the Writings which his Maſter dictated to him, who was hap-

(*b*) Father *Mambrun*, known by his Latin Verſes, and a Treatiſe of Epick Poetry.

pily

pily ſo wiſe and diſcreet, as not to be uneaſie with him for it. He ſucceſſively run over all the other Parts of the Mathematicks; and altho' this Science was not then in Vogue in *Colleges*, nor even any where elſe, to that Degree it has been ſince, he was brought to maintain publick Theſes in the ſame, the firſt that ever were known at *Caen*.

He was now to go out of his Claſſes, to ſtudy CIVIL LAW, and take his Degrees therein. Two Works which appeared then (*c*) interrupted that uſeful Study, and threw him into another more amuſing. Theſe two Works were the Principles of DES-CARTES, and the GEOGRAPHY of the Holy LAND by BOCHART. A Proof that we ſhould not harbour Preju-

(*c*) The Principles of *Des-Cartes*, printed in 1643. and the *Phaleg.* of *Bochart* in 1646.

dices, or at leaſt be too obſtinate in Opinion, is, that the ſame Man, and a moſt judicious Man too, may ſometimes in his different Ages think very differently: Mr. HUET, who cenſured *Des-Cartes* a great while after ſo ſeverely, reliſhed him very well at firſt, admired, and adhered to him many Years. As for BOCHART'S GEOGRAPHY, it made a double Impreſſion on him, both by the immenſe Learning of the Work, and by the Preſence of the Author, MINISTER of the PROTESTANTS at CAEN. All that Book beng full of HEBREW and GREEK, he was for knowing thoſe Languages forthwith, went to pay his Reſpects to him, deſired his Advice, Friendſhip, and became his Diſciple; but the Pupil began to be touched with Emulation. It often happens that a young Man with Wit and Courage, needs no more than

than a living Example to determine his Studies. He, who did no more all his Life long than make Madrigals, might have been a Scholar of the firſt Rank, if he had had in good Time a BOCHART before his Eyes.

Mean while we muſt not think that Mr. HUET was an Enemy to thoſe Amuſements and Exerciſes which belong to Youth. He ſaw the World, (*d*) was for being well received, and endeavoured to pleaſe. 'Tis true he did not dance very gracefully, but was the firſt at racing, the beſt Horſeman: he exerciſed Arms, vaulted, and ſwam better, he ſays, than any of his Companions.

Being twenty Years of Age and one Day, by the Cuſtom of NORMANDY he was at length delivered from his Guardians, who ſordidly withheld as much from him as they could. His greateſt Deſire, and

(*d*) Huetiana, *p.* 4. Comment. *p.* 58.

the firſt he gratified, as ſoon as Maſter of himſelf, was to ſee *Paris*; not ſo much by Curioſity, as to furniſh himſelf with Books, and to know the PRINCES OF LEARNING. It is one of his own Expreſſions. He paid his firſt Reſpects to P. SIRMOND, who was then above ninety Years of Age. This amiable and venerable Father to his great Learning joined as great Candour, which was natural to him, and as great Civility, he had acquired in the Court of ROME, and that of FRANCE. Father PETAU, not near ſo aged, naturally more rigid than the other, ſmoothed his Brow in Favour of a young Provincial, who was not only ready to hear him, but even durſt ſometimes (*e*) recede from his Opinion, and contend, though very young, againſt ſo great a Man.

(*e*) See his DISSERTATIONS on divers Subjects, &c. Tom. ii. *p.* 432, 433.

I muſt name all the learned Men of that Time and Place, if I ſhould mention thoſe Mr. HUET was acquainted with, and whoſe Eſteem he gained, at his firſt Journey to PARIS. Two Years after he had Occaſion to know thoſe of *Holland*. For the QUEEN of SWEDEN having invited BOCHART to make her a Viſit, he went with him, and ſet out in the Month of *April* 1652. BOCHART arrived when Things were in ſuch a State, that he was not ſo graciouſly received, as he had Reaſon to expect. The Health of that Princeſs was impaired. Too much Application to Study, for ſhe ſpent whole Nights in it, had diſordered her Blood.

BOURDELOT her Phyſician, a cunning Courtier, and who had ſtudied her Humour as well as her Conſtitution, obliged her to break off all Converſation with Men of

Learning, in Hopes to have the whole Government of her to himſelf. BOCHART acquieſced. As to Mr. HUET, he was too young to be formidable to that Phyſician. He ſaw the Queen often, ſhe was for retaining him: but the inconſtant Humour of CHRISTINA made him timerous, and he thought it better to return into FRANCE, at three Months End. The principal Advantage he reaped by his Voyage, was a Manuſcript of ORIGEN, which he had copied at STOCKHOLM.

Among the learned Men he knew in HOLLAND, SALMASIUS was of the firſt Rank. Would any one, who ſees the Warmth which is predominant in the Writings of SALMASIUS, ſay he was in the Bottom eaſy, communicative, and Good-nature it ſelf? To that Degree that he bore to be domineer'd over by a haughty,

haughty, ill-humoured Woman, who boaſted ſhe had for a Husband, but not for a Maſter, *the moſt learned of all the Nobles, and the moſt noble of all the Learned.* When Mr. HUET was returned into his own Country, he took to his Studies with more Vigour than ever, to qualify himſelf to give us his Manuſcript of ORIGEN. Two Sorts of Academies, one formed in his Abſence for polite Learning, another which he founded himſelf for *Phyſicks*, ſerved to divert him from Time to Time: or rather to change his Studies. In tranſlating ORIGEN, he weighed the Rules of Tranſlation, and the divers Manners of the moſt celebrated Tranſlators. This made Way for the firſt Book he publiſhed, whereby, if I may ſay ſo, he made his Entry into the Land of Letters, in which his Readers admired, what they afterwards admired in all his

other Works, indefatigable Reading, judicious Criticiſm, and above all LATINITY, which would have done Honour to the Age of AUGUSTUS. In ſhort, ſixteen Years after his Return from SWEDEN, his ORIGEN ſaw the Light. Thoſe ſixteen Years he ſpent in his own Country, where without other Employment, he was taken up wholly with himſelf and his Books, not interrupting his Way of Life, unleſs to go every Year, and ſhew himſelf for a Month or two at PARIS.

In the mean Time he had ſome ſhining Offers of Fortune, with which he was not dazled. The QUEEN of SWEDEN, after ſhe had abdicated the Crown, and betook her her ſelf to ROME for the remaining Part of her Life, would have drawn him to her in 1659. But that which befel BOCHART, who was ſo ardently deſired, and afterwards ſo

ſoon

ſoon forgot, deterred him from yielding to the Temptation of ſeeing ITALY. He was deſired in SWEDEN to be intruſted with the Education of the young KING; the SWEDES had in 1660 made CHARLES GUSTAVUS Succeſſor to CHRISTINA; but he had the Reſolution to thank them for their Offer, and thoſe who judge of Actions by Events, will find he did very well to remain in *France*. For about ten Years after he was nominated Sub-preceptor to the DAUPHIN, without having any other Patrons but his own Merit, and the Diſcretion of MR. *de* MONTAUSIER.

He arrived at Court in 1670, and continued there 'till 1680, the Year in which the DAUPHIN was married. The more he found this new Station expoſed him to frequent Avocations, the greater Husband he was

of

of his Time. He would ſcarce allow himſelf a few Hours for Sleep. All the Reſt of his Leiſure was ſpent, in the neceſſary Duties of his Employment, or in his DEMONSTRATIO EVANGELICA, begun, and finiſhed in the Hurry of the Court.

I muſt not here forget the Service he did to Learning, by procuring for us that Set of COMMENTARIES which are commonly call'd IN USUM DELPHINI. Altho' the firſt Thought of them came from Mr. *de* MONTAUSIER, we are indebted to Mr. HUET for drawing the Plan, and directing the Execution of it, as far as the Docility, or the Capacity of the Workmen would permit.

Being wholly taken up ſo long in Compoſitions, and Lectures, that had Religion for their direct Object, at length arrived to the Age of Forty Six, he entered into Holy Orders.

After

After which he had the Abbey of AUNAY, whereto he retired every Summer, when he left the Court. One of the Works which he compoſed there under the Title of *Quæſtiones Alnetanæ*, will æternize the Name of that Solitude, agreeably ſituated in the Groves, which is the moſt pleaſant Canton of the lower NORMANDY.

In 1685 he was nominated to the Biſhoprick of SOISONS. Before his Bulls were expedited, Mr. the Abbot *de* SILLERY being promoted to the Biſhoprick of AVRANCHE, they made an Exchange with the King's Conſent. But by Reaſon of ſome Diſturbances betwixt the Court of *France*, and that of *Rome*, they could not be conſecrated 'till the Year 1692. I believe ſo long a Delay was not very uneaſy to Mr. HUET, for the Life he had led, and liked above all other, did not at all agree with

with the Epiſcopal Care and Duties. Accordingly it was not long before he grew weary of them. He reſigned his Biſhoprick of *Avranche* in 1699.

To make him Amends, the King gave him the *Abbey* of *Fontenay*, which is at the Gates of *Caen*. The Love Mr. HUET had for his Country induced him to fix there, and in that View he appropriated the Gardens and the Houſe of the Abbey. His Country ſeem'd very amiable to him, as long as he knew none but Friends there. But as ſoon as ever he had taken Poſſeſſion of the Lands, Law-ſuits attacked him from every Quarter, although at the ſame Time, Thanks to his native Air, he had ſome Diſpoſition for the *Chicanarie* of the Bar.

He then went again to *Paris*, and lodged in a profeſſed Houſe of the *Jeſuits*; where he lived his laſt twenty Years, during which he applied himſelf

himſelf principally to write Annotations on the vulgar Tranſlation of the Bible. He did not only look upon that holy Book as the Fountain of Religion; but took it (*f*) of all Books to be the moſt proper to form, and exerciſe a Scholar. He had read over the *Hebrew* twenty four Times, in conferring it with other Oriental Texts. Every Day, as he ſays, not one excepted, he ſpent two or three Hours therein, from 1681, to 1712.

A cruel Diſeaſe which ſeiſed him that ſame Year, and confined him to his Bed near ſix Months, conſiderably weakned not only his Mind but his Body, and Memory. In the mean while, when he had a little recovered his Strength, he undertook to write his own Life; and did it with all the Elegancy, though

(*f*) Commentar. *p.* 354. Huetiana, *p.* 182.

not

not with all the Order, nor Accuracy of his other Works: his Memory, not ſo good as it had been, diminiſhed daily; ſo that not being in a State to form a regular Work of it, he did no more than commit to Paper ſome looſe and ſeparate Thoughts, which was as much as he could then do.

Although he was pleaſed to intruſt me with the only Copy, to publiſh it under the Title of *Huetiana*; I cannot flatter myſelf that for this Reaſon, I am allowed to relate here, with what Condeſcenſion he treated me, ſince I had the Honour to be known to him in 1708. 'Tis queſtioned when we mention great Men, whether it be Pride or Gratitude, which moves us to ſpeak of their Amity; and frequently through Fear of being ſuſpected of a Weakneſs, we omit a Duty.

Never-

Nevertheleſs I cannot but own I procured the fifth Edition of his *Poems* in 1709. I am the more willing to remember it, becauſe without this Edition, which *awaked his ſleeping Muſe*, 'tis very likely he would never have thought of the five (g) new *Metamorphoſes*, which he compoſed in 1710 and 1711. All his Wit appears there. How exquiſitely fine both for a Scholar of his Rank, and an Age ſo far advanced! how florid, and if we may ſay ſo, what juvenile Imagination!

As to what remains, if it be well conſidered that he lived fourſcore and eleven Years, wanting a few Days, addicted himſelf to Study from his tender Infancy, reſerved moſt of his Time to himſelf, almoſt all the while enjoy'd unalterable Health; that at his *Levee*, his lying down, and his

(g) Lampyris, Galerita, Mimus, &c.

Meals, he made his Servants read to him; that in a Word, to uſe his own Terms, *neither the Fire* (*h*) *of Youth, the Incumbrances of Buſineſs, the Diverſity of Employments, the Society of his Equals, nor the Avocations of the World, could leſſen the invincible Love of Learning, which he always retain'd:* we may infer from hence that *M. d'Avranches* was of all Men the moſt ſtudious.

Beſides his being naturally robuſt, he lived by Rule. From the Age of forty he eat no Supper, although he dined very ſparingly. He was content with common Fare, no Ragoos, and hardly put an eighth Part of Wine into his Water. Towards the Evening he took a (*i*) medicinal Sort of Soop. Indeed, when he was

(*h*) Huetiana, *p.* 4. *See likewiſe his* Commentar. lib. 1. *p.* 15. & lib. v. *p.* 278. (*i*) Known by the Name of Dr. *Delorme's red Broth.*

beſt

beſt in Health, he had a pale Look, enough to make it be feared he was indiſpoſed.

One Singularity very remarkable is, that for two or three Days before his Deceaſe, all his Wit revived, all his Memory returned. He employed thoſe precious Moments in Acts of Piety, and died in Peace, full of Truſt in God.

I know no more of his Manuſcripts than theſe: A Latin Tranſlation of the *Amours of Daphnis and Chloé*, compoſed at the Age of eighteen; a Romance intitled *The falſe Incas*, writ at the Age of twenty five; a Philoſophical Treatiſe *of the Weakneſs of Human Underſtanding*, made at the ſame Time with his *Quæſtiones Alnetanæ*; an Anſwer to Mr. REGIS, touching the Metaphyſicks of DES-CARTES; his Annotations on that Tranſlation of the Bible called the Vulgar; and a Collection of between

five and ſix hundred Letters, as well *Latin* as *French*, to Men of Learning. As to his printed Books they follow according to the Order in which they appeared.

*De Interpretatione Libri duo. Paris*, 1661. in 4to. *Stade*, 1680. in 12mo. *Hague*, 1683. in 8vo.

*Origenis Commentaria in ſacram Scripturam. Rhoan*, 1668. in fol. 2 Vol. *Cologne*, 1685. in fol.

*De l'Origine des Romans. Paris*, 1670. 1678. 1685. 1693. 1711. in 12mo. *London* 1672. in 16to, *Engliſh. Amſt.* 1679. 1716. in 12mo, *Dutch.*

*Diſcours prononcé a l'Acadamie Françoiſe. Paris* 1674. in 4to. *Amſt.* 1709. in 12mo.

*Animadverſiones in Manilium, & Scaligeri Notas: à la fin du Manile Dauphin. Paris*, 1679. in 4to.

*Demonſtratio Evangelica. Paris*,

1679. 1694. in fol. *Amst.* 1680. in 8vo. 2 Vol. *Leipsick*, 1694. in 4to.

*Censura Philosophiæ Cartesianæ.* *Paris*, 1689. 1694. in 12mo. *Helmstad.* 1690. in 4to. *Franeker*, 1690. in 12mo. *Hanover*, 1690, in 12mo.

*Quæst. Alnetanæ.* *Caen*, 1690. in 4to.

*De la Situation du Paradis terrestre.* *Paris*, 1691. in 12mo. *Leipsick*, 1694. in 12mo. and in 4to. *Amst.* 1701. in 12mo. *Ibid. lat.* 1698. in 12mo.

*Nouveaux Memoires pour servir a l'Histoire du Cartesianisme.* *Paris*, 1692. 1711. in 12mo. *Utrecht*, 1698. in 16to. *Amst.* 1698. in 12mo.

*Statuts Synodaux pour le Dioceſe d'Avranches.* *Caen*, 1693. 1695. 1696. 1698. in 8vo.

*Carmina.* *Utrecht*, 1664. 1700. in 8vo. *Deventer*, 1668. in 8vo.

*Amſt.* 1672. in 16to. *Paris*, 1709. in 12mo.

*De Navigationibus Salomonis. Amſterdam*, 1698. in 8vo and in fol.

*Notæ in Anthologiam Epigrammatum Græcorum: à la fin de ſes Poeſies, Edition de Grævius. Utrecht*, 1700. in 12mo.

*Origenes de Caen. Rouen*, 1702. 1706. in 8vo.

*Diſſertations ſur diverſes Matieres de Religion, & de Philologie. Paris*, 1712. in 12mo.

*Hiſtoire du Commerce & de la Navigation des Anciens. Paris*, 1716. in 12mo. *Bruſſels*, 1717. in 12mo.

*Commentarius de Rebus ad eum pertinentibus. Amſterdam*, 1718. in 12mo.

*Huetiana. Paris & Amſt.* 1722. in 12mo.

# THE
# Author's PREFACE.

## *To Philoſophers his Friends.*

I. The Introduction and Argument of the Work.

II. Its Diviſion.

### I.

HEAR, my dear Friends, *not my Opinion, touching the Nature of human Underſtanding, and Reaſon, but that of an excellent Perſon, very well verſed in all the ancient and modern*

The Introduction, and Argument of the Work.

*Sects of Philoſophy. He was a Provincial, a Man of Quality. Had travelled very much in his Youth in Favour of his Studies, and contracted ſtrict Friendſhips with thoſe who had ſome Reputation in ſpeculative Sciences. Being afterwards preferred to an important Poſt in his Country, he met with potent Enemies, who did him ill Offices, and obliged him to leave his native Air, and retire to* Padua, *a Place very agreeable and proper to the Studies he had always cultivated, and which I had a good while ſince choſen for the Retreat of mine. He came to ſee me, according to his wonted Cuſtom, not as believing me a* Philoſopher, *but a Lover of* Philoſophy; *ſuch as he knew me to be by ſome Writings that had eſcaped me. I was preſently ſtruck with the Beauty of his Wit, the Extent of his Knowledge, and principally with his Candour and Civility. Pleaſed with the Eſteem and Acknowledgment, in which I received*

*ceived his Viſits; and in the Conformity of our Inclinations, it was not long before he open'd to me the Bottom of his Heart. For after I had obſerved that he warmly attacked all Sects of* Philoſophers, *in the Manner of the* Academicks, *without adhering to any; and not being able by all the Application, and Queſtions which I wearied him with, to make him take a Side, I had Recourſe to Sollicitations, and pray'd him very ſeriouſly to be open. Overcome at length by Importunity, he complied; and in this Conference, with many other which followed, he communicated his Thoughts to me touching* Philoſophy *without Reſerve. His Diſcourſes ſeem'd to be ſubtil, and very far from common Opinions, and I was not willing to loſe them. I took Care therefore to write them down, as ſoon as we parted, leſt I ſhould forget them; and for my own Uſe only, without think-*

*ing they ſhould ever go out of my Hands. And thus he explained himſelf.*

*When I made my firſt Application to the Study of* Philoſophy *in my Youth, I was very much diſturbed at thoſe perpetual Diſputes of* Philoſophers, *upon all Subjects; and in Expectation of the great Advantages of* Philoſophy, *which were ſo much boaſted of, Knowledge of* Truth, *and Tranquility of Mind: I was much ſurprized to find my ſelf plunged in the thick Darkneſs of invincible* Ignorance, *and Debates of which I could ſee no End. And being educated in the* Philoſophy *of* Ariſtotle, *according to the Cuſtom of that Age, I was ſtill more aſtoniſhed that the Sect of that* Philoſopher *only, ſhould be able to produce ſo great a Diverſity of Opinions, of* Greeks, Arabians, *and* Latins, *of Ancients and Moderns. Wonder'd at the Blindneſs of human Underſtanding, ſeeing* Ariſtotle *had the Boldneſs to ſay that Philoſophers who preceded*

*preceded him, were either ignorant, or vain-glorious in preſuming they had carried* Philoſophy *to its utmoſt Perfection, and thought he might* ſafely *aſſure the World, the great Work would ſoon be accompliſhed. Though in the mean while it was ſo far from it, that new Conteſts were ſeen to ariſe daily, and Time which moderates all Things, did on the contrary exaſperate* the Spirits *of* Philoſophers; *ſo that their* Science *ſeem'd not to be ſo much the boaſted Search of* Truth, *as a Method of prevaricating with Art, and diſputing with Subtilty. I wiſh ſome Perſon of Authority and Learning would undertake what is reported of the* Proconſul Gellius; *being at* Athens *he aſſembled all the* Philoſophers, *who were there very numerous, and by a premeditated Diſcourſe exhorted them, to put an End to their long Debates, offering his Mediation and good Offices. A Thing which has appeared ridiculous to*

*a*

*a great many, but not ſo to me: for the Accommodation might have been effected, if each of them laying aſide his Prejudices, would have entred into a new and ſerious Examination of the Opinions he appeared to be ſo zealous for; if he would have propoſed no otherwiſe than as uncertain, what he was accuſtom'd to maintain as unqueſtionable, and learn once for all, to withhold his Belief, and ſuſpend his Judgment. Neither can I diſapprove the Study* Nero *made of* Philoſophy, *to diſcover the Cauſe of ſo great a Diverſity of Opinions; provided he had had a ſincere Deſire to terminate thoſe Controverſies, and not to foment them for his Diverſion, according to the Levity and Malignity of his Temper.*

*The Doctrine of* Des-Cartes *in theſe later Times obtained much Reputation; and becauſe it drew a great Multitude after it by its Novelty, as is uſual, many conjectured that* Ariſtotle *would*

*ſoon*

oon be forſaken, and Des-Cartes get he Aſcendant. Tired with the Divi- ions of the Peripateticks, I was wil- ing to know what might be expected rom that new Philoſophy. I was ve- much pleaſed with it, for it appear- d to me to be made up of a ſmall Num- er of Principles, and thoſe very ſim- le; it found its Way to firſt Cauſes by clear and eaſy Method. Neverthe- ſs it was not long ere I percei- ed, that the Peripateticks ſtill ſtood heir Ground. That dangerous Facti- ns were formed againſt Des-Cartes; hat Gaſſendi made himſelf Chief of a arty, and renewed the Sect of Epi- urus with Succeſs, all decried, and uſpected of Impiety as it was, and al- hough he had more Adverſaries than riends. I was then willing to con- ne my ſelf wholly within the Bounds f Platoniſm, not thinking I could find better Maſter, than that great Man, o whom Antiquity gave the Sirname

of

of Divine, whom ſo many of the moſt learned have admired, and the moſt ancient Fathers of the Church followed making Uſe of his Method and Opinions to explain and defend the Chriſtian Doctrine. But when I came to dive into the Bottom of that Philoſophy, ſeeking the ſolid Foundations of Truth I found Nothing in it which could fix my Mind no certain and determined Principles no Syſtem nor Connexion of Doctrine; no Coherence; Nothing conſequential. Every Thing there is handled with Delicacy and Elegance, but pro and con maintained: and the Affirmative and Negative defended by Reaſons of equal Validity, without determining the Mind to either. Beſides that wavering and fluctuating Sect has produced others, of which each pretends to be the genuine and real Doctrine of Plato, and that all the reſt are ſophiſticate. Inſomuch that having read the Works of Plato, and the great

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Part of the Platonicks, I found my ſelf at a greater Diſtance from Truth than ever. That did not diſcourage me in the leaſt. I was for running through all the ancient Philoſophy. I collected the various Opinions from every Quarter; read exactly what Diogenes Laertius, and others beſides had writ of the Lives, and the Tenets of Philoſophers their Predeceſſors, hoping that in this great Number of Sects, as contemptible as they ſeem'd, ſome one or other might be met with leſs ſubject to Contradictions, and more proper to fix the Uncertainty and Anxiety of the Mind.

My Hope was not vain. The Doctrine of Arceſilas, Carneades, and Pyrrho, pleaſed me much; and I conceived that they were better acquainted with the Nature of human Underſtanding, than all other Philoſophers: altho' I did not approve of their Opinions in every Thing, and having relinquiſhed

*quiſhed them in many Points, I becam the proper Author of my own Syſtem A long Uſe of Study, Reflections, an Meditations, having afterwards mad me know better, I remained convince that neither I nor any other Man elſe ever had any natural Faculty to di cover Truth with full and abſolut Aſſurance, and that the Cauſe of a Error, is the Precipitation of our Spi rits, giving Credit too raſhly to Opini ons which are propoſed.*

*Thus this learned Man ſpoke; an perceiving the Surprize I was in to ſe a Doctrine renewed, which I thoug was entirely extinct and aboliſhed: Yo admire my Freedom, ſaid he, in pre ſuming to offer a Diſcourſe which ſeem to be repugnant to common Senſe: o rather my Timidity and Diffidence, n not venturing to give Credit to the Te ſtimony of my own Senſe and Reaſon But if you'll be pleaſed to hear me,*

*pro*

*promiſe myſelf ſo much from the Goodneſs of your Temper, and great Candour, that you will on the contrary wonder at the Temerity and Blindneſs of human Underſtanding, in believing we ſee, what we do not ſee, and inconſiderately flinging ourſelves into Error. I will hear you, ſaid I to him, with all the Attention you can deſire; and I heartily wiſh you may perform what you promiſe. Then he began to ſpeak as follows.*

## II.

*To give certain Limits to this Diſpute, it ſeems to be neceſſary to divide it into three Parts. Firſt and above all we are to prove, that human Underſtanding cannot know* Truth *with perfect and abſolute Certainty, by the Aid of Reaſon. In the next Place we muſt enquire with Accuracy, what is the moſt ſure Way, and legitimate Method* Its Diviſion

*thod of* Philoſophizing. *Laſtly we will anſwer the Objections of thoſe whoſe Sentiments are contrary to ours.*

# OF THE WEAKNESS OF Human Understanding.

## BOOK I.

*Truth cannot be known to human Understanding, with entire and perfect Certainty, by the Help of Reason.*

### CHAP. I.

*We must first shew:* 1. *What Philosophy is.* 2. *What human Understanding is.* 3. *What Idea is.* 4. *What Thought is.* 5. *What Reason is.* 6.

*What Truth is. 7. There are many Kinds and Degrees of Certainty. The Certainty of Faith perfects the Certainty of human Nature.*

HE who undertakes to prove the Weakneſs of human Underſtanding, finds at the firſt Entrance of the Subject, a large, open Field, and beaten long ſince by the greateſt Part of the ancient *Philoſophers*; in which he muſt reaſon upon *Nature*, as well as the Search of *Truth*. For he does not obſerve the Order that is requiſite, who endeavours to know *Truth*, without underſtanding what *Truth* is, and whether it may be known.

*What Philoſophy is.*

1. For *Philoſophy* being Nothing elſe but the Study of *Wiſdom*, the Search of *Truth*, and an Effort of human Underſtanding to know *it* by the Aſſiſtance of Reaſon; it is neceſſary for the *Philoſopher*, to know what *Truth*, what human Underſtanding, and Reaſon is, and be aſſured that human Underſtanding may know *Truth* by the Help of Reaſon, before he engages in a Search which may give him a great deal of Trouble without any Succeſs. As a *Huntſman* who prepares to follow his

his *Game*, if he perceives that inaccessible Rocks, and impenetrable Caverns hinder his taking it, will desist; and not begin a laborious Pursuit to no Purpose. Let us endeavour then to discover the Nature of *Truth*, of Reason, and Man's Understanding, as far as we are allowed to discover it. For being convinced that we can know Nothing by Reason with perfect Certainty, I should be a Fool, to pretend to know clearly what *Truth* and Reason are.

2. Thus then I define the human *Mind* or *Spirit*: A Principle, or Power born in Man, moved or excited to form *Ideas*, and Thoughts, by the Reception and Impression of *Species* in the Brain. By these *Species*, I understand not *Images*, or *Shadows* that proceed from Bodies, which are likewise so called; but the *Traces* imprinted in the Brain by the Motion of the Spirits and the Nerves, when they are agitated by the Organs of Sensation, and influenced by external Causes: Which Impression of these *Traces* makes the Soul, intimately joined to the Brain, find it self disposed in a certain Manner. *What human Understanding is.*

3. I call an *Idea*, an *Image* which the Soul forms to it self, when disposed in *What an Idea is.*

a certain Manner by the Impreſſion of Species in the Brain.

*What Thought is.* 4. I call *Thought*, the Action of the Underſtanding, moved and determined by *Species* in the Brain, to form to it ſelf *Ideas*, to compare, and judge of them together.

*What Reaſon is.* 5. I call *Reaſon*, that *Faculty* human Underſtanding has to ſearch after Truth by its natural Operations.

*What Truth is.* 6. As to *Truth* (not that which the *Philoſophers* call *Truth of Exiſtence*, but that which they call *Truth of Judgment*) I define it thus: The Agreement and Correſpondence of the Judgment, which our Underſtanding makes in View of the *Idea* that is in us, with the external Object which is the Origin of that *Idea*. To explain this Definition; ſuppoſe the *Object* which preſents its ſelf without is a *Wolf*, from whence the *Idea* which is in me is formed; my Underſtanding in View of this *Idea*, conceives and judges it to be a *Wolf*. This Judgment which my Underſtanding forms, correſponds and agrees with the external *Object*; and therefore is ſaid to be true: and this Correſpondence, and Agreement of Judgment, which my Underſtanding has formed with the external

ternal *Object*, is called *Truth*. Whereas on the contrary if my Underſtanding in View of this *Idea* conceives and judges it to be a Dog, this Judgment formed by my Underſtanding, is different from, and unlike the external *Object*; and for this Reaſon is ſaid to be Falſe; and this Difference or Diſagreement with the external *Object*, is called Falſity or Error. I call an external *Object*, either that which is preſent, when the Underſtanding is moved or determined to think of it; or that which has been preſent to our Minds before, and formed its *Idea* or *Image* in us; whether it be the Repreſentation of the *Object* we have ſeen before; or the Deſcription of it which has been made to us. From whence it comes that in Sleep, the Deliriums of a Fever, or in Madneſs, ſo many *Images* repreſent themſelves to the Mind, whoſe external *Objects* are not preſent, but whoſe *Ideas* remain in us. Some give a Definition of theſe Things different from ours, and affix other Notions to theſe Terms. I ſhall make Uſe of thoſe I have now propoſed. If it appears then that the Nature of Man be ſuch, that he cannot know with abſolute Certainty, and entire Evidence, by the Help of Reaſon,

that an external *Object* agrees with, and anſwers to the Judgment which his Underſtanding has formed thereof, in View of the *Idea* he has of it; it muſt neceſſarily follow that Man cannot know Truth with perfect Certainty by the Aid of Reaſon.

*There are many Kinds and Degrees of Certainty. The Certainty of Revelation perfects the Certainty of human Nature.*

7. As to the Reſt, there are two Ways of knowing *Truth*. Either we know it with Doubt and Uncertainty; as when we ſee, or think we ſee, in the Language of the *Poet*, the *Moon* behind the Clouds. Or we know it with Certainty; and that Certainty has likewiſe two Degrees. For the Certainty wherein the *Bleſſed* know the Things of *Heaven*, which we may call the ſupreme Degree of Certainty, is different from the Certainty with which Men know Things on Earth during their Life. Moreover, this laſt kind of Certainty has alſo two Degrees. For by *Faith* we know moſt certainly the Things which God has revealed, with a Certainty which may be called *divine*, becauſe *God* is its Author; and we know other Things with human Certainty. This human Certainty has likewiſe divers Degrees; for there are ſome Things we know with more Certainty than other. We know more certainly,

and

and more evidently, that the Whole is greater than its Part, than we know that the *Planet* of *Saturn* is above that of *Jupiter*, or the Truth of what is atteſted by two Witneſſes. This laſt Knowledge is not certain but by a Certainty of Probability; the ſecond is certain with a true Certainty; and the firſt is moſt certain. There are then three Degrees of human Certainty; the higheſt, the mean, and the loweſt: each of which likewiſe is capable of being augmented or diminiſhed.

There are ſtill two other Kinds of human *Certainty*; the one we call *Phyſical* or Natural, the other *Moral*. I know certainly that twice two make four, and that two Bodies equal to a third, are equal between themſelves. I know alſo that near to the *Boſphorus* of *Thrace* there is a City named *Conſtantinople*; and that there was formerly an Emperor of *Rome*, named *Auguſtus*: That Fire heats, and Ice cools. I have theſe firſt *Notices* with a Certainty I call *Phyſical*; by the Light of Reaſon, a Faculty which Nature has given to my Underſtanding: and I have theſe laſt *Notices* by ſufficient Evidences, by the Authority of Uſage, and the Information of Experience, to which Things,

Men after their Way and ordinary Practice, are accuſtomed to give Credit with Aſſurance. We may ſee from hence, how many Kinds of Certainty *God* has imparted to human Underſtanding during this Life. That *divine* Certainty with which we know Things by *Faith*, is not however equal to the heavenly Certainty of the *Bleſſed*, neither in Reſpect of Firmneſs, nor Evidence, according to the Teſtimony of St. *Paul*, (*a*) when he ſays, *We now ſee through a Glaſs, darkly*; and that the *Bleſſed* in Heaven ſee *Face* to *Face*; that *now he knows in Part, and that then he ſhall know as alſo he is known*. Moreover this Certainty of *Faith*, which comes from *God*, and we at preſent enjoy, is far above human Certainty, even the firſt Degree; whether we acquire it by the Aſſiſtance of Reaſon, or the Help of the Senſes. St. *Chryſoſtome* (*b*) ſays therefore with much Truth, that if we do not hold thoſe Things we know by *Revelation* and *Faith*, to be more certain than thoſe we know by Senſe, we want *Faith*. Seeing then we muſt allow the higheſt

(*a*) 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 12. (*b*) St. *Chryſoſt. Hom.* 21. upon the Epiſt. to the *Hebr.*

Degree

Degree of human Certainty, as for Example, that whereby I hold some first *Principles*, and *Geometrical Axioms* for certain, to be very inferior to the Certainty of *Revelation* or *Faith*, and the Certainty of *Faith* to be very inferior to that of the Blessed, it is evident the highest Degree of human Certainty is not perfect: for that which is perfect, is compleat in all Points, and wants Nothing necessary to entire Perfection; but to human Certainty, there wants that of *Revelation*, or *Faith*; and moreover the Certainty of the *Blessed*.

When I say then Man cannot know *Truth*, it must be understood, that in this Life he cannot know it with that supreme Certainty, as to want Nothing of intire Perfection; but may know it with human Certainty, to which *God* is pleased the Understanding of Man may arrive, whilst he is join'd to this mortal Body. Human Understanding having Nothing more sure or solid whereon it may rely, we may call it the highest human Certainty, although not absolutely perfect, and though Man assisted by the Power of Nature only, cannot know *Truth* with entire Evidence, and may know it much more certainly by the Help of Faith, but still according to the

Terms

Terms of the Apoſtle *through a Glaſs darkly*. For what is wanting to human Nature, to obtain a perfect Knowledge of things, the *Grace* of *God* ſupplies by *Faith*, fortifying the Imbecility of Reaſon and the Senſes, diſſipating the Obſcurity of Doubts, and ſuſtaining the anxious Mind. But I ſhall ſoon explain theſe things more at large.

## CHAP. II.

*Man cannot know Truth with perfect and intire Certainty, by the Aſſiſtance of Reaſon. The firſt Proof drawn from ſacred Authors.*

BUT before we prove it by the Things themſelves, we will demonſtrate it by the Authority of *God*, who frequently warns us of our Ignorance, and giving ourſelves uſeleſs Pains, when we attempt to acquire the Knowledge of Things, and their Cauſes; and that Man is ſo made by Nature, as not to be able to obtain the Fruit of true Knowledge by his Studies. As it is explained by *So-*

*Solomon*, the wiſeſt of Men. (*a*) *I applied mine Heart to know Wiſdom, and to ſee the Buſineſs that is done upon the Earth: (There is that neither Day nor Night ſeeth Sleep with his Eyes) then I beheld all the Work of God, that a Man cannot find out the Work that is done under the Sun: becauſe though a Man labour to ſeek it out, yet he ſhall not find it; yea, further, though a wiſe Man think to know it, yet ſhall he not be able to find it.* He imputes the Cauſe of this Weakneſs to the Body, in the Maſs of which, while the Spirit remains involved, it cannot raiſe itſelf to the Knowledge of Things. For he ſays: (*b*) *The corruptible Body preſſeth down the Soul; and the earthly Tabernacle weigheth down the Mind that muſeth upon many Things. And hardly do we gueſs aright at Things that are upon Earth, and with Labour do we find the things that are before us: but the Things that are in Heaven, who hath ſearched out? and thy Counſel who hath known, except thou give Wiſdom, and ſend thy holy Spirit from above?*

He declares in another Place, that this infinite Deſire of Knowledge, which

(*a*) Eccl. viii. 16, 17. (*b*) Wiſ. ix. 15, *&* *ſeq.*

is

is born with us, was given of *God* to Man, as an Itch, and a Leproſy to torment him to no purpoſe. (*c*) *I have ſeen*, ſays he, *the Travel which God hath given to the Sons of Men, to be exerciſed in it. He hath made every thing beautiful in his Time, alſo he hath ſet the World in their Heart, ſo that no Man can find out the Work that God maketh from the Beginning to the End.* From hence come thoſe Sayings of *Eccleſiaſticus*, which ſeem to have been taken out of the Writings of *Solomon*; (*d*) *Seek not out the Things that are too hard for thee, neither ſearch the Things that are above thy Strength. But what is commanded thee, think thereupon with Reverence; for it is not needful for thee to ſee with thine Eyes, the Things that are in ſecret. Be not curious in unneceſſary Matters: for more Things are ſhewed unto thee, than Men underſtand.* St. *Paul*, who was ſent by *God*, to teach the *Gentiles* the true *Philoſophy*, ſhews plainly to the *Greeks*, who ſought the Knowledge of *Truth* with ſo much Application, how much the Works of *God* are above the Capacity of human Underſtanding. (*e*) *It is written*, ſays he,

(*c*) Eccl. iii. 10, 11. (*d*) Ecclus. iii. 22, *&* *ſeq.* (*e*) 1 Co i. 19, *&* *ſeq.*

*will*

*will destroy the Wisdom of the Wise, and will bring to nothing the Understanding of the Prudent; Where is the Wise? Where is the Scribe? Where is the Disputer of this World? For after that in the Wisdom of God; the World by Wisdom knew not God*; that is to say, by human Wisdom, which is Reason; *It pleased God by the Foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe*; that is to say, to provide for the Salvation of those who make Use of *Faith*, and not of Reason. And afterwards: *The Gentiles seek after Wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified.* Then he adds: *The Foolishness with God, is wiser than Men.* And a little lower: *God hath chosen the weak Things of the World to confound the Things which are mighty.* And afterwards he says, *(f) The Wisdom of this World is Foolishness with God.* And at last he confirms this Doctrine taken from *Isaiah*, by this Oracle of *David: God knows the Thoughts of Men that they are but vain.* He dehorts the *Colossians* from the Study of that proud and deceitful *Philosophy*, which relies on human Reason, and not on the Faith of *Jesus Christ*. *(g) Be-*

(f) 1 Cor. iii. 19. (g) Col. ii. 8.

*ware,*

*ware*, ſays he, *leſt any Man ſpoil you through Philoſophy and vain Deceit, after the Tradition of Men, after the Rudiments of the World, and not after Chriſt.* It was then by theſe Conſiderations that the Emperor *Conſtantin* (*h*) in his Harangue to the Aſſembly of *Saints*, ventured to ſay openly, that Man cannot diſcover *Truth.* And *Arnobius* more ancient than *Conſtantin*, in his Writings ſays, that (*i*) Man is *a blind Animal, who does not know himſelf; and cannot know by any Reaſoning, what he ought to do, in what Time, and in what Manner.* He places this likewiſe in the Number of the Benefits, conferred on human Nature by *Jeſus Chriſt*, and for which, he ſays, he would have merited the Eſteem of God, had he been but meer Man, namely, becauſe he has ſhewed that Men are *imperfect Creatures, who give Credit to vain Opinions, cannot comprehend any Thing aright, know Nothing, nor ſee what is before their Eyes.* The ſame *Arnobius* ſays in another Place, that when human Underſtanding *would diſcern Truth, the Obſcurity of Things obſtructs it, and as if it was blind, ſees nothing of Certainty,*

(*h*) Conſtant. *Orat. ad cat. Sanct.* Cap. 8. (*i*) Arnob. *lib.* 1 & 2. p. 46, 47.

*and*

*and by the Obliquity of Surmiſes and Conjectures, falls into Error; that we diſpute every Thing, but know Nothing.* And though we do know Nothing, impoſe upon our ſelves nevertheleſs by hearkning wholly to our Pride, which perſuades us we have attained to *Science*; and that our Weakneſs and Ignorance is the more pitiable, becauſe when (as it ſometimes happens) we do ſpeak Truth, we don't certainly know we have ſpoken Truth; and ſays it was in this View, that *Jeſus Chriſt* called the Mind of Man from the Search of thoſe Things, which are above his Capacity, and excited him to the Contemplation and the Service of *God*.

*Lactantius*, a Diſciple of *Arnobius*, trod in the Steps of his Maſter, and taught that Man is ignorant of *Truth*, that he knows Nothing by *Philoſophy*, and ought to regulate his Life according to received Cuſtoms. All his Book of *Inſtitutions* is full of this Doctrine, but particularly, when, as if he would encourage us to do what we now plead for, he ſpeaks thus: (*k*) *Holy Writ teaches us that the Thoughts of Philoſophers are Folly, that this Doctrine*

(*k*) *Lactant. Inſtit. Lib.* 3. *Cap.* 1.

*ought*

*ought to be eſtabliſhed by Acts, as well as Proofs; leſt any one deceived by the ſpecious Name of Wiſdom, or led aſide by the Splendor of vain Eloquence, ſhould delight to place Faith in human Things, more than divine:* that is to ſay, to obey Reaſon rather than Revelation.

*Saint Gregory Nazianzen* (*l*) puts us in Mind of our Ignorance; when he ſays that we ſee not the State nor the Reaſons of Things created, nor of the Creation, but through a Cloud while we are in this Life; ſo thick is the Obſcurity which covers our Underſtanding, ſo clog'd are we by the Weight of our Bodies; but ſhall ſee thoſe Things clearly, when ſeparate from them. *St. Auguſtin* is of the ſame Opinion. (*m*) *Not that Philoſophy of this World*, ſays he, *which our Religion does juſtly deteſt; but the Philoſophy of another intellectual World: to which, this Reaſon as ſubtil as it is, would never have invited our Souls, blinded as they are by divers Darkneſſes of Error, and polluted by the Defilements of the Body, if God in his Mercy towards Men, had not vouchſafed unto us the Light and*

(*l*) *Greg. Naz. Orat. 34. quæ eſt 2. de Theol.* (*m*) *Auguſtin. contr. Academic. lib. 3. Cap. 19.*

*the*

*the Authority of the divine Underſtanding; of which not only the Precepts, but the Acts alſo have a Power to excite Souls to conſider with themſelves, and to turn their Eyes towards their true Country, without the Contention of Diſputes.*

In another Place he expreſſes himſelf in this manner: (*n*) *Becauſe human Underſtanding obſcured by the habitual Darkneſs, with which it is covered in the Night of Sin, cannot ſteadily ſee the Clearneſs nor Sanctity of Reaſon, it was a very wholſome Eſtabliſhment, to leave our glimmering Sight, ſullied with the Duſt of Humanity, to be conducted towards the Light of Truth by Authority.* (*o*) *Iſidore Peluſiote* declares he knows clearly that he knows Nothing, according to the *Maxim of Socrates.*

In the Council of *Nice*, that which was ſaid by a Layman was applauded with univerſal Conſent, viz. that *Jeſus Chriſt* and the Apoſtles have not taught us the Subtilties of *Logick*, and the Niceties of Reaſoning, but a clear and pure Doctrine, which is preſerved by Faith, and good Works. When they

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(*n*) *Auguſtin. de Mor. Eccleſ. Cath.* Cap. 2. (*o*) *Iſi-Peluſ. lib.* 3. *Epiſt.* 241.

were to judge of the Doctrine of *Arius*, *Alexander* Biſhop of *Conſtantinople* had Recourſe to the *Grace* of *God* only, and deſpiſed the Refinements of *Logick*. Laſtly, *St. Thomas Aquinas*, the celebrated Dictator of the School, pronounced, that our Minds are ſo hampered by the Senſes, they cannot comprehend Things perfectly, and their Imbecility is ſo great, that if they would judge of Matters which are certain in themſelves, they will become uncertain.

# CHAP. III.

## *The* SECOND PROOF.

*Man cannot know with perfect and intire Certainty, that an external Object anſwers exactly to the Idea imprinted in him.* 1. *Images, Forms, or Shadows, which flow from external Bodies, and preſent themſelves to us, are not like them.* 2. *The Truth of the interpoſed Medium, through which the Shadow or Species paſſes, to come to the Inſtruments of our Senſation, is dubious.* 3. *The Certainty of the Senſes dubious.* 4. *The Fidelity of the Nerves, and the Animal Spirits, dubious.* 5. *The Fidelity of the Brain dubious.* 6. *The Fidelity of the Mind or human Underſtanding dubious, and its Nature to us unknown.*

BUT it muſt be ſhewed from the Nature of Things, that Man cannot know *Truth* by Reaſon, with perfect Certainty. I have ſaid above that

*Truth* is the Agreement of the external *Object*, with the Judgment which our Underſtanding forms of it, in View of the *Idea* of that *Object*, which is in us. But Man cannot be certain of this Conformity, unleſs he is aſſured beforehand, that the *Species*, or Image, which proceeds from that external *Object*, of what Nature ſoever it be, is the true Image of that *Object*. He muſt moreover be certain that this *Species*, or *Image*, is conveyed whole and intire to the Inſtruments of the Senſes, without having received any Alteration by the Interpoſition of Things it meets by the Way. Then he muſt know with Certainty, that the Inſtruments of the Senſes after they have been moved by this *Species* or *Image*, and advertiſed the Brain of that Motion, by Means of the *Fibres* of the Body, were ſure and faithful Meſſengers, and made no Alteration in the true State of the Thing, of which they gave a Report. It is farther neceſſary he be aſſured, that when the Brain excited by this Advertiſement, makes known to the *Soul* joined to it, the Advice it has received, gives in its Report *bonâ Fide*, without any Alteration of the State of Things. And laſtly, Man ought to know certainly, that the Judgment

ment which his *Soul* forms upon this Report of the Brain, is juſt and ſure. All theſe Things are of ſuch a Nature, that what Pains ſoever the moſt ſubtle *Philoſopher* may take, he cannot alledge any Proof of the Certainty of them. And on the contrary we have more Reaſons to doubt of the Conformity of the *Image*, or *Species*, of the external *Object*, with that Object, of the Truth of the interpoſed *Medium* by which this *Species* paſſes, to come to the Inſtrument of Senſe; of the Truth of the Senſes, of the Truth of the Brain, and the Perception of our *Souls*.

*The Images, Species, or Shadows, which proceed from external Bodies, that preſent themſelves before our Eyes, do not reſemble them.*

1. For firſt of all, who will venture to ſay, that the *Image*, *Shadow*, or *Species*, which iſſues from the external Body, which preſents it ſelf before us, is the true Reſemblance of it without any Difference? I don't examine here, what this *Image* is; for that Inquiry belongs not to this Place; in the mean time I make Uſe of the Opinions and Terms, commonly taught in the *Schools* of *Philoſophers*. By what Art, what Induſtry can my Underſtanding, which judges of this Reſemblance, compare an external *Object* with its *Image*; ſince both one and the other are out of my Underſtanding; ſince this Image cannot be

ſtayed to be conſidered, and ſome have doubted even whether it exiſts?

Let us ſuppoſe however that it may be conſidered, and we may give our Judgment of it; we ſhall doubtleſs find them very unlike. The *Form*, or *Image*, which comes from a Tree, is that a Tree? and if it be not a Tree, can it reſemble a Tree? For we uſe the Word *Reſemblance* improperly, when we ſay that a Picture, or Statue reſembles its Original. The true and perfect *Reſemblance* we are upon, is not that which only repreſents the external Figure, Size, and Colour, but all the Properties of the entire Body, and the Parts which compoſe it, as well internal as external. To which if there be any Thing wanting, there will be in that Reſpect a Defect of *Reſemblance* in it, and we ſhall not know the outward *Object* as it really is. Now the *Species*, or *Image*, of this Tree is different from the Tree in many Things. The Tree is viſible, without Motion, and Solid; its *Species*, or *Image*, is not viſible, has no Conſiſtence, and is very moveable, very thin, and very fluid.

*The Truth of the interpoſed Medium by*

2. But although I ſhould grant that the *Image* or *Species* of the outward *Object*, does abſolutely reſemble it, it will

will be nevertheleſs true by an Infinity of Experiences, that the *Medium* this *Species* paſſes through, which iſſues from the *Object*, to come and move the Organ of Senſe, is very variable, and ſubject to change. Let us take, for Example, the *Image* or *Species* of the Colour of an *Object*, which ſtrikes the Sight. The Colour we ſee in *Objects* at Even, is different from that we ſee at Noon. The Colour we ſee by the Light of the *Sun*, is different from that we ſee by the Light of a *Flambeaux*.

*which the Shadow, or Species paſſes to come to the Inſtruments of our Senſe, is dubious.*

If in a cloſe Chamber we ſet *Brandy* on Fire, and temper it with Salt; or burn *Brimſtone* in a new Cup, as *Anaxilaus* the Phyſician did for his Diverſion, ſays *Pliny* (*a*), the Faces of thoſe who are preſent, will appear pale, of a Cadaverous Hue, and we ſhall think we ſee dead Bodies walk. Houſes ſeem to tremble, when we look on them through Smoke. We ſee a great Variety of Colours in the *Objects*, which are near us. If we look upon the ſame at a great Diſtance, they will all appear of one Colour, which is ordinarily blue, like that of the Sea, and the Sky,

(*a*) Plin Lib. xxv. Cap. 15.

although neither the one nor the other is blue. For this Blueneſs changes according to the Diverſity of the Wind, and the Sea is ſometimes of a purple, and ſometimes of a yellow Colour. Thoſe vaſt Bodies of the *Stars*, whoſe Magnitude we know by *Mathematicks*, how ſmall do they appear to our Eyes? Is there any Need to add the Example of the Oar of a Boat, which, though really ſtraight, ſeems to be broke at the Part of it, which is between the Air and the Water? Or that of ſtained Glaſſes, which impart their Colours to *Species*, or Images, of external Bodies? That of *Glaſs Priſms*, which though compoſed of three flat Faces, or Sides, and of a Matter uniform, clear, and tranſparent, if we place them near the Eye, they will make all external *Objects* appear round, and painted with an agreeable Variety of Colours: or that of Leaves of Gold, which although yellow, appear green, when we hold them between the Eye and the Light.

The ſame may be ſaid of Sounds, and Odours, which ſeem to be different, according to the different *Medium*, through which they paſs to come to us. It is indubitable then that theſe *Species*, Shadows, or Images of external Bodies, are

are ſubject to infinite Changes, according to the Variety or Alteration of the *Medium.*

*The Fidelity of the Senſes dubious.*

3. Let us ſuppoſe nevertheleſs, that the *Species*, or to ſpeak with *Apuleius* (*b*), thoſe *caſt off-Cloaths*, which flow inceſſantly from Bodies, are received by our Senſes without any Alteration, how many Proofs have been brought by *Philoſophers*, to convince us of the Deception of our Senſes? I ſhall only inſtance one, which I take to be unanſwerable.

It is certain that Senſe depends on the Inſtruments of Senſe. We perceive Things otherwiſe, when the *Organs* of the Senſes are ſound and vigorous, than we do when they are indiſpoſed. Many Things were to our Reliſh during our Youth, which are diſtaſteful to us in our advanced Age. There are many to whom *Objects* appear greater, when they look on them with one Eye; and ſmaller, when they look on them with the other. Since the Diverſity of the Senſes is ſo great, that we cannot find a Conformity in them, even in one and the ſame Perſon, we muſt own that this Diverſity is much greater ſtill in that

(*b*) *Apul.* Apol. 1.

Multitude

Multitude of Men, whoſe Bodies, and Inſtruments of Senſe which depend on Bodies, are ſo very unlike. For if the Difference of the Aſpects of Men is ſo great, that Nature ſeems to ſport with it, or to try her Fecundity; and that in ſo great a Number of Men, we cannot find two who perfectly reſemble each other, can we believe they differ in Nothing as to the internal Conformation of their Bodies, ſince their outward Figures are ſo different? If we are ſilly enough to think ſo, Phyſicians will laugh at us, who having diſſected human Bodies, find ſo great Diverſity in the Parts within.

It muſt be acknowledged then that our Senſes do not perceive external *Objects*, but only the Impreſſion of the *Species*, or Images, which proceed from the Outſide of Things, and that this Impreſſion which comes from without, does not produce the ſame Effect in all Men, but is different according to the different Inſtruments of the Senſes; as Sounds differ, according to the different Thickneſs, and Tenſion of the Strings which occaſion them; and therefore we cannot know, which of all the *Senſations*, produced in different Perſons by one and the ſame external *Object*, differs moſt from that *Object*. This

This is what the *Satyriſt* has elegantly expreſſed in theſe Words: *Our Eyes deceive us, and the Uncertainty of our Senſes impoſes on our Reaſon. A Steeple which ſeems to be ſquare when I look on it near, ſeems to be round at a Diſtance. A Man who has enough of it, nauſeates Honey, and the Noſe has often an Averſion to Perfumes. One Thing would not pleaſe us more than another, if the Senſes were not in a perptual Contraſt.*

*The Fidelity of the Nerves, and the animal Spirits, dubious.*

4. Let us go on in an eaſie Manner, as we have begun; and ſuppoſe yet that the Teſtimony of the Senſes is faithful, when they receive from without the *Species*, or Images, that carry with them a certain and particular Declaration of the external *Object*, from whence they proceed; and ſuch as they cannot carry from the external *Object*, from whence they did not proceed; which *Zeno* thought neceſſary for the Knowledge of *Truth:* yet who will be anſwerable for the Verdict of the Senſes, when they report to the Underſtanding the *Senſations* which they had? ſince for that Purpoſe they make Uſe of the *Fibres* of the Nerves, whoſe Conformation being very different, as Anatomiſts and Phyſicians have obſerved, it follows that

that the Reports they make to the Underſtanding cannot be uniform. They uſe likewiſe the Animal Spirits, which are not in the ſame Quantity, and whoſe Motions are very different in all Men.

I know *Deſcartes* believed, and has made a great many believe ſo too, that the Animal Spirits go from the Brain into the Cavity of the Nerves, and diffuſe themſelves around the internal *Fibres* of the Nerves, and ſerve to excite Motion in the Muſcles; that theſe *Fibres* are like very fine Threads, and joyned together in Form of Cords, which extend themſelves every Way even to the Extremity of the external Members, and aſſiſt the Inſtruments of Senſe; inſomuch that being moved, or ſhaken by the *Species* or Image of the external *Object*, the *Fibres* adjoyned to theſe Inſtruments are moved alſo; and as they are encompaſſed and ſwelled by theſe Animal Spirits, they carry to the Brain with great Celerity that Motion imprinted on them in the Extremities and external Parts of our Body. As when we touch an extended Cord at one of its Extremities, the other End ſhakes almoſt at the ſame time.

For

For my own Part, who by many Diſſections I have made of the Bodies of living Creatures, know clearly that the Nerves, which are diſperſed through the whole Body, how much ſoever they may be ſwelled by the Animal Spirits, are yet very ſlack and crooked, turn in and out in many different Manners, eaſily lengthen and ſhorten themſelves by the Movement of the Part whereto they are annexed, I cannot comprehend how they reſemble an extended Cord, and with ſo much Celerity convey to the Brain that Movement which was impreſſed on them in one of their Extremities. Let us ſuppoſe however this may be done in ſome Manner, it is moſt certain that the Animal Spirits are much more proper for this Office; for being, as they are, ſubtile, and of incomparable Levity, and filling the Cavity of the Nerve, it is eaſie to comprehend that the Motion imprinted on them from without, may be carried immediately to the Brain. For though the Cavities which contain theſe Spirits are as ſinuous, and as much twiſted in and out as one would have them to be, yet they keep their Diſpoſition and Form. As a Man blowing a Trumpet bent round, if when he puts his

his Mouth to one of the Holes, he ap
plies his Hand to the other, will find
that the Hand is puſhed by the Air with
in, as ſoon as that internal Air is puſhed
by his Breath.

This Opinion is not hurt by the Ex
perience which has been ſometimes
made of a Palſy, that had deprived a
Member of Motion, without depriving
it of Feeling, for this Member received
Motion, when a great Quantity of Spi
rits was conveyed into its Muſcles by
the Nerves. And if the Brain does
not furniſh ſuch a Quantity of Spi
rits as is neceſſary to ſwell up theſe Muſ
cles, or if theſe Muſcles do not receive
them, and there are no more Spirits re
maining than juſt neceſſary to fill the
Nerves, and not enough to ſwell the
Muſcles, Feeling then will remain with
out Motion. 'Tis poſſible too that as
there are many hidden *Fibres* in the Ca
vity of the Nerve, ſome may be de
ſigned to furniſh the Muſcles with Spi
rits, and to convey them to the Extre
mities of the Body, and form Motion.
As the Blood being carried from the
Heart to the Extremities by the *Arte
ries*, is conveyed back by the *Veins* to
the Heart again. But this in paſſing.
Let us only add to what has been ſaid
that

that the Spirits ſometimes are ſo agitated by Sickneſs, Sleep, Wine, and other Cauſes, and the *Fibres* of the Brain ſo violently ſhaken, that it receives divers Impreſſions thereby; inſomuch that the Underſtanding ſometimes thinks it has certain *Senſations*, which the Inſtruments of the Senſes never had.

*The Fidelity of the Brain is dubious.*

5. Beſides; the Brain, which is the Citadel of the Soul, the Laboratory of Reaſon, the Operator of Perception, as is ſuppoſed; has it the ſame Form and Structure in all Men? Do we not ſee it leſs in ſome, and greater in others? The Conformation of the Head, which is a certain Sign of that of the Brain, is ſo different in Men, that whole Nations have Heads round, others long, ſome pointed, and many flat. We know that the Excellence of Wit, the Strength and the Fidelity of the Memory, proceeds from the Conformation and Condition of the Brain and the Head.

'Tis a Maxim of the Philoſopher *Parmenides* (*c*), that the Diſpoſition of Man's Underſtanding, depends on the Diſpoſition of the Parts of the Body. Experience, confirmed by a common *French* Proverb, tells us that thoſe who

(*c*) *Parmenid. apud Ariſt. Metaph.* Lib. iii. Cap. 3.

have

have great Heads, are ordinarily People of great Senſe, and that the Smallneſs of the Head is accompanied with little Wit. *Hippocrates* (*d*) ſays, the Nation of the *Macrocephali*, (that is to ſay, of the Long Heads) perſwaded that the Length of the Head contributed to the Valour of Man, made an Engine to lengthen the Heads of their Children, and that Nature in Time being obedient to Art, gave this Figure to the Heads of all the People. There is a Nation in *America*, who take Care to form the Heads of their Children pointed like a *Sugar-Loaf*, which is conſummate Folly, and near to Madneſs.

The Head of *Therſites*, the Man *Homer* repreſents to us ſo ſilly and fooliſh, was of this Form. From hence comes that Proverb, *So many Heads, ſo many Minds:* For from this Diverſity of Organs, neceſſary to give us the Senſe of external *Objects*; *Fibres*, *Spirits*, *Brains*, *Heads*, and from their Differences, ariſes that great Diverſity of Opinions, which is found among Men. From hence it comes that they are ſo unſettled in their Judgments, reject in their advanced Age, what they admired

(*d*) *Hippocr. de Aq. Aer. & Locis.* Sect. 3.

in

in their Youth; that often in the Space of one Day, and ſometimes of one Hour, the ſame Man changes his Opinion and Inclinations, contradicts, and plunges himſelf into ſo great a Variety of Deſires.

*The Fidelity of human Spirit or Underſtanding, dubious, and its Nature unknown to us.*

6. But if all theſe *Organs*, which are ſo fallible, were of unqueſtionable Fidelity, we ſhould not for that Reaſon be better inſtructed in the Manner of the Soul's perceiving the *Species*, or Images, imprinted in the Brain, or in the Manner whereby it judges of Things it has perceived, or in that laſtly whereby theſe *Species* purely corporeal and material, can make themſelves known to the Soul, which is incorporeal and immaterial.

Since then we know not in what Manner, that Impreſſion made in the Brain can reach the Soul, and ſince the Soul in the mean time feels its ſelf moved, and affected in ſome Meaſure by the Brain, which was affected it ſelf by a corporeal Motion, ſo as to conceive the external *Object* in a certain Meaſure, as for Example, to conceive the *Sun* to be like a luminous and ſhining *Diſh*, it will be uncertain whether this ſame Figure be in the Eye, or a Figure different from it. Nay, on

the contrary the Soul is convinced, that the Image of the Sun repreſents it ſelf inverted in the Eye; although it finds in it an Idea of the Sun that is not inverted. It is likewiſe convinced that all the Objects which come to her by the Report of the Eyes, repreſent themſelves in it in a Situation contrary to what they are repreſented in the Eyes; that what appears to it to be the Top of a Thing, is the Bottom in the Eye, and what appears to be on the right, is on the left Side in the Eye.

The Soul is likewiſe uncertain, whether the Image which comes from the Sun, be like that repreſented in the Eye. Neither does it know, whether any Image of the Sun be repreſented in the Eye, or whether it ſelf forms not that Idea on the Traces imprinted in the Brain before: as in thoſe Ideas Men have in Sleep, Diſtraction, Drunkenneſs, and which at the ſame Time have no Reality; and moreover as in the Ideas we form our ſelves, when awake, in our Senſes, and ſober.

Beſides, it has been ſought even to this Hour, by infinite Diſquiſitions, and Diſputes, what the Nature of our Underſtanding is, the moſt noble Faculty of the Soul; in what Part of our Body placed,

placed, what its Action is, whether it has no Ideas, but by the Miniſtry, and Meſſage of the Senſes, and whether Nature did not imprint them in its firſt Formation. That Diverſity of Opinions alſo found among Men, the Difference of their Ideas, and Ways of conceiving Things, which are the Operations of the Underſtanding, ſhews us clearly, how variable, uncertain, and unknown the Nature of it is. Now all theſe Diſputes and Queſtions touching the Underſtanding, cannot be decided but by the Underſtanding it ſelf, which being of a dubious Nature, how ſhall a dubious Thing be decided and determined by a Thing which is dubious? Can the Taſte reliſh it ſelf? The Smelling ſmell it ſelf? The Sight ſee it ſelf?

Rightly and perfectly to comprehend the Nature of the Underſtanding, another Underſtanding is certainly neceſſary: For there is no *Faculty* in us beſides to do it by. If it be unknown to us then, and we are ignorant of its Operations, with what Aſſurance can we make Uſe of a Thing unknown to us, for the Perception of other Things which are as much unknown? Or what Credit can we give to Things we perceive by Means thereof?

Since the *Species*, or Images of external *Objects*, that are the Cauſe of the *Ideas* which are formed in us are ſubject to ſo many Alterations; ſince our bodily Senſes are ſo obtuſe and dull; their *Organs* ſo weak; the Nature of human Underſtanding ſo obſcure, what Knowledge can we promiſe our ſelves of the Conformity and Agreement between the external *Object* which preſents it ſelf to us, and the *Idea* of that *Object* imprinted in our Soul?

## CHAP. IV.

### The THIRD PROOF.

*Human Underſtanding cannot know the Nature of things with perfect Certainty.*

WE have ſtill behind a very clear Proof of the Ignorance which is natural to us, in that the *Eſſence* of Things is incomprehenſible to human Mind. For ſince I have now proved that Nature has formed us in ſuch a Sort, as not to be able to acquire a certain Knowledge of external *Objects*, though

though this ought to ſuffice to take from us all Hope of knowing *Truth* with Certainty by Reaſon: if I ſhew farther, that the *Eſſence* and Nature of Things, and even of Man himſelf is ſuch, that he cannot know it, the Confidence of human Underſtanding will have no Foundation to ſupport it, becauſe I ſhall have made appear then, that Man is not capable of knowing Things with Certainty and Evidence; and likewiſe that by their Nature they cannot be known to Man certainly and evidently, which I prove thus.

It is impoſſible to know the *Eſſence* of a Thing, unleſs we know wherein it agrees, and differs from other Things: that is to ſay, if we know not its *Genus* and *Differentia*. For *Philoſophers* agree, that herein conſiſts the *Eſſence* of Things, and that the beſt Definition we can give of them, is, by their *Genus* and *Differentia*. If then the *Genus* and *Differentia* of Things cannot be known, we can neither know their Definition nor *Eſſence*. Now we cannot know the *Genus* of a Thing, that is to ſay, in what it agrees with another of a different *Species*, if we know not the *Eſſence* of both. It is then neceſſary to know the *Eſſence* of that Thing,

of which we would know the *Genus*. But we have now ſaid that to know the *Eſſence* of that Thing, we muſt know its *Genus* firſt; ſo that *Eſſence* and *Genus* have Need one of the other to be known, and the Knowledge of the one depends on the Knowledge of the other. We muſt thereby fall into a *Circle*, which is a Sort of defective Reaſoning, and proves nothing.

What I have now ſaid of *Genus*, ought to be ſaid of *Differentia*: for I cannot know in what one Thing differs from another, unleſs I know them both. This will be clear by an Example.

Ask the *Profeſſors* of *Philoſophy* what Man is, they will tell you he is a *rational Animal*. Here is the *Genus*, and the *Differentia*. Now the *Genus* ought to be equally common to the *Species* which are comprized under that *Genus*. Man then ought to be an *Animal* in the ſame Manner, as a Horſe is an *Animal*. For if Man is an *Animal* in another Manner than a Horſe, there will be a Difference in the *Genus* even as *Genus*, and ſo there will be no *Genus*. But how do you know that a Man and a Horſe are equally *Animals*, if you know not the Nature of them

both,

both, and perfectly what an Animal is? and this is no leſs uncertain. For if you ask the ſame *Profeſſors* what an *Animal* is, they will anſwer it is that which lives and feels; has Life and Sense. But how can you know, *my dear Maſters*, whether a Man and a Horſe feel in all Points alike; whether the *Senſation* of a Man be intirely the ſame as that of a Horſe?

*Des-Cartes*, that new Inventer of Truth, maintains (if we will believe him) that the Horſe feels the Spurs which prick him, no more than the Tree does the Ax which cuts it. Beſides, we ſee certain Plants which give Signs of Senſe, when touched, and are not *Animals* notwithſtanding: nor conſequently is a Horſe. Add hereto, we ſee a Horſe, a Man; but do not ſee an *Animal*, but when we ſee a Horſe, a Man, a Fiſh, a Bird, or ſome other *Animal*. We know not *Animal* then, which is the *Genus*, but by its *Species*: ſeek to this very Hour to know the *Species* by *Genus*; and fall thereby into that vicious Kind of Reaſoning, called *Dialel*, that is to ſay alternatory; when to prove a Thing in Queſtion, we make uſe of another, whoſe Proof depends on the very Thing in Queſtion.

Moreover, ſince to know the *Eſſence* of a Thing, we muſt know its *Genus*; to know the *Eſſence* of the *Genus*, we muſt know its *Genus*; and the *Genus* of that *Genus*, and ſo always aſcend. Thus the Thing will be infinite, and we ſhall never arrive to the Knowledge of what we ſeek; or at beſt muſt ſtop at ſome ſuperior *Genus*, of whoſe *Genus* we are ignorant. But if we know not the *Genus* of that ſuperior *Genus*, we likewiſe know not that ſuperior *Genus*, nor conſequently any other *Genus* which depends on it, nor the Thing it ſelf in Queſtion. Let us proceed now to *Differentia*, which with *Genus* compoſes the *Eſſence* of Man.

This *Differentia* is taken from his Reaſon, with which it is pretended he is endowed. Now that is the very Thing in Queſtion in our preſent Inquiry, namely; if Man be endowed with Reaſon, and whether he can reaſon. Since we are not aſſured he can do ſo, we are not aſſured he is a rational *Animal*, nor that Reaſon is his *Differentia*. Let us ſuppoſe nevertheleſs he is rational, are we aſſured he is of all *Animals* the only one which is ſo?

We have Writings of ſome great *Philoſophers*, who maintain that Reaſon is found

found likewiſe among other *Animals*. No-Body can decide this Conteſt, if he is ignorant what Man is; and what thoſe other *Animals* are. We muſt then return to the Matter in Queſtion; namely what is Man, and then we ſeek in a Thing unknown, the Knowledge of what is unknown, without being able to extricate our ſelves out of this Perplexity.

## CHAP. V.

### The FOURTH PROOF.

*Things cannot be known with perfect Certainty, by Reaſon of their continual Change.*

THERE is ſtill another and that a moſt manifeſt Cauſe, which prevents our Knowledge of Things, *viz.* the continual Mutability they are ſubject to: and this Mutability is ſuch, that they cannot remain in the ſame State, no not for the leaſt Space of Time. To expreſs this continual Change of Bodies, the ancient *Philoſophers* made uſe of the Compariſon of a River, very applicable to our Subject. For *Heraclitus* well

well obſerved, that no Perſon ever enter'd twice into the ſame River; becauſe the Waters which flow'd yeſterday from that Place of the River where he went in, are ſince gone, and other ſucceed, which flow there now: and the *Philoſopher Cratylus* maintain'd with no leſs truth, that we cannot ſo much as enter once into the ſame River: in like manner your Horſe that carries you now, and which you think you know, is not the ſame which carried you yeſterday, but another; and that you rode on but a Moment ago, is not the ſame Horſe but another. Time has taken off one Part of him. His Fleſh, Bones, Skin, Hair are changed, by the Nouriſhment he has received, the Excrements he has voided, by Increaſe, Reſpiration, Perſpiration, external and internal Heat, by the Deprædation of the Air that ſurrounds him, and the Spirits he loſes: the Acceſſion of ſupervening Matter repairing the Loſs of that which went from him.

For this Reaſon *Plato*, and all the ancient *Philoſophers* he quotes in his *Theætetus*; namely *Empedocles*, *Heraclitus*, *Protagoras*, and the greater Part of other *Philoſophers*, (unleſs you except *Parmenides*) and thoſe celebrated Poets, *Ho-*

*Homer* and *Epicharmus*, who have been followed by (*a*) *Seneca*, ſaid that all Things are, but not one of them exiſts, in ſuch Sort as we may ſay it is ſure and fixed. From whence it follows that when I apply my ſelf to attain the Knowledge of a Thing, it will ceaſe to be what it was, before my Mind can ſet about the Work. This obliged the *Philoſopher Cratylus* to affirm, we muſt be ſilent. Now ſeeing *Univerſals*, ſo called, are compoſed of Things particular and ſingular, and ſince we cannot know particular Things, becauſe they eſcape us by this continual Flux and Mutability, we cannot know the *Univerſals* which are compoſed of them.

This Reaſoning had ſo great an Effect upon *Saint* (*b*) *Auguſtine*, that he drew this Conſequence from it: Namely; *we muſt not expect the perfect Knowledge of Truth from our Senſes.* And *Ariſtotle* (*c*) diſpoſed to anſwer this Reaſoning, did it in a Manner ſo frivolous, that he has even confirmed it. Let us proceed farther yet.

Since all Things are ſubject to Change, ſo muſt I; and change from Moment

(*a*) *Seneca* Epiſt. 58. (*b*) *Auguſtine.* Quæſt. 83. Quæſt. 9. (*c*) *Ariſtot.* Metaph. lib. iii. Cap. 5.

to

to Moment, every Hour. Whilſt I ſpeak, I become another Man; and although this Alteration does not plainly appear in a little Time, we eaſily know it ſoon after. How then ſhall Man, ſo changeable, variable and inconſtant in himſelf, judge aſſuredly of all other Things?

## CHAP. VI.

### The FIFTH PROOF.

*Things cannot be known with perfect Certainty, by Reaſon of the Difference of Men.*

IF Men are ſo ſubject to Mutability, that not one of them is conſiſtent with himſelf for a very ſmall Space, there muſt be an infinite Difference in the great Multitude of Men, as I have already obſerved. From this great Variety, what Congruity of Judgment, what Conformity and Steadineſs of Opinions can we expect? How ſhall I know that what ſeems to me to be white, is ſo to you? and that the Colour, which you

you and I call white, ſeems to you and me to be one and the ſame Colour?

Since Things then may appear different to Men, or at leaſt we cannot know whether they appear to them alike, in this great Multitude, who ſee things differently, or know not whether they may ſee them in one and the ſame Manner; which ſhall we think, perceives them, as they truly are in themſelves? and in a Diſcord ſo univerſal, ſhew me the Rule of *Truth* wherein all Men ſhall acquieſce?

The Poet *Euripides* was well acquainted with this Defect of human Nature, when he made *Eteocles* ſay, that (*d*) *Amongſt Men Nothing is equal, nor alike, except the Names of things, but that Things themſelves have Nothing in them permanent nor ſure.*

The Philoſopher *Protagoras* acknowledged it likewiſe, and ſaid every one is a Rule of Truth to himſelf. But I may add moreover, that no Man can be ſo, by Reaſon of this Diſſimilitude I have now ſpoke of, not only of all Men from one another, but of every Man from himſelf. This Matter is excellently handled by *Plato* in his *Theætetus*,

(*d*) *Euripid.* Phœniſſ. vi. 504. 505.

and

and by *Sextus Empiricus*. (*e*) They both deſerve to be conſulted.

## CHAP. VII.

### The SIXTH PROOF.

*Things cannot be known with perfect Certainty, becauſe their Cauſes are infinite.*

TO theſe we muſt join the following Proofs, *viz.* All Things of this World are ſo connected, we cannot conceive one without conceiving another; nor that other without a third; nor that third without a fourth, 'till carrying our Mind along, we have run through the Infinity of Things, whereof this World is compoſed. But human Underſtanding not being by its Nature capable of knowing all, and unable to know any thing without that Knowledge, it can conſequently know Nothing.

I would, for Inſtance, know what Man is, as compoſed of Body and Soul, and

(*e*) *Sext. Empir. Pyrrhon. Hypot.* lib. 1. CAP. 14.

en-

endow'd with Reaſon; I cannot attain this unleſs I underſtand the Nature of his Body, Soul, and Reaſon. The Body of Man being compoſed of *Fire*, *Air*, *Water* and *Earth*; it is neceſſary to be thoroughly acquainted with the Nature of theſe *Elements*, to be qualified to know that of Man. I begin with *Fire*, and to underſtand it, apply my ſelf to the ſearch of what *Philoſophers* have thought thereon. I conſult *Des-Cartes*, and cannot learn from him what the Nature of *Fire* is, if I am not exactly inſtructed in the *Syſtem* of the World which he has invented. Neither is it enough to be thoroughly acquainted with that, I muſt examine, and compare it with the *Syſtems* of other *Philoſophers*, and afterwards judge which of all theſe is true. To be able to do this well, I muſt aſcend again to the Knowledge of firſt Cauſes, which have hitherto been unknown.

When I ſhall have ſought out the Nature of *Fire*, I muſt paſs to that of *Air*, and afterwards to that of *Water*, and laſtly to that of *Earth*; and in each of theſe Enquiries we ſhall find the ſame Difficulties. From hence we muſt proceed to the Fabrick of a human Body, its Structure, and Uſes of the Parts

which compoſe it: Matter of infinite Labour and Study, each of theſe Things, after all the Diſputes and Experiences of ſo many Years, remains in Obſcurity.

We muſt examine likewiſe, how the Body of Man is produced; an important and difficult Inquiry, that of Generation, and the Cauſes of Generation; what the Father, what the Mother contribute to it; from whence they derive the Faculty of engendring; how the Infant is formed in the Mother's Belly, how nouriſhed there, what gives him Strength and Induſtry to get out of that Priſon; whether a Man may be engendered without Father or Mother, as ſome have believed; why a Male comes to be born, why a Female; why the Production is flat noſed, why curl'd hair'd, why little and low, why cholerick, why addicted to Women, why a great Eater, why drunken, why healthy, why of long life. See what a Number of Articles muſt be known in this Matter.

But ſuppoſing they may be known, behold other inexplicable Difficulties ariſe, touching the Nature of Man's Soul; what it is, whence it is, how it acts, what are the Effects of its Action, and how joined to the Body. When we have diſcovered all this, we muſt afterward

wards ſee what Reaſon is, its Uſes and Effects. This Inquiry will engage you in the Study of all Parts of the *Dialectick* Art. The Thing would be infinite to enumerate, if we could, all Sciences neceſſary for attaining to that of Man; and Life would not ſuffice, for acquiring the Knowledge of the leaſt Part of what we muſt know to underſtand ſome thing of it. We had better then reſt contented, and not undertake a uſeleſs Labour.

## CHAP. VIII.

### The Seventh Proof.

*Man has no certain Rule of Truth.*

THE Want of a certain *Rule* of *Truth*, which God has denied human Nature, is an invincible, and capital Proof againſt the Temerity of the *Dogmatiſts*. For as all things are blended with Truth and Falſhood, it is difficult for us to diſtinguiſh them, and being ſo frequently deceived, how can we make this Diſtinction, without we can apply to it ſuch a certain *Rule* of *Truth*, as

will undoubtedly make known to us, that what agrees to it, ſhall be true; and the contrary falſe. For which Reaſon, thoſe who addicted themſelves to the Search of *Truth*, to whom the Name of *Philoſophers* has been given, employed their utmoſt Sagacity to find out that *Rule*. Gave it the Name of CRITERIUM, and divided it into two Kinds; one for the *Rule* of Actions, the other of Opinions: All our Life to be conducted by the firſt, and all our Knowledge to depend on the ſecond: which being well eſtabliſhed, we ſhall have Means to diſtinguiſh Truth from Falſehood: and this is what is called the *Rule* or Κριτήριον of *Truth*.

This *Criterium* may be taken divers Ways, but at preſent we are in Search of that only which is properly the Meaſure of Comprehenſion, or Perception; by Means of which Meaſure, and proceeding in it with Art, we may comprehend Things obſcure. We ſpeak here only of that Sort of *Criterium*, or *Rule* of *Truth*, which makes Uſe of Reaſon to acquire the Knowledge of *Truth*.

This *Criterium* is divided into three Kinds, the *Criterium of which*, the *Criterium by which*, and the *Criterium according to which*. The *Criterium of which*

*which*, is Man; for the Point is the Knowledge of *Truth*, which Man would acquire. The *Criterium by which*, are the Inſtruments that Man makes uſe of to know *Truth*, as the Senſes, or the Underſtanding. And the *Criterium according to which*, is the Action of human Mind, which applies the *Criterium by which*, to the Search of *Truth*.

Others have already proved by moſt evident Reaſons, that theſe three Kinds of *Criterium* are uncertain, and uſeleſs to the Diſcovery of *Truth*. For ſince the Nature of Man is to us unknown, having been ſought for in Vain by ſo much Study, and ſo many Conteſts of *Philoſophers*; it is moreover much more unknown to us, whether it be capable of knowing *Truth*. The *Criterium of which*, namely human Nature, is then uncertain.

If it be ſo, as the Thing ſpeaks itſelf, it follows that the *Criterium by which*, is ſtill more uncertain, I mean the Senſes of Man, or the Impreſſions they receive, or their intimate Touches, or Fancy, which is otherwiſe called Imagination; that is to ſay, an Impreſſion or Impulſe made in the Soul by an external *Object*, or a *Modification* of the Underſtanding, which the *Latin Philoſo-*

*phers* call *Viſum*. The Underſtanding likewiſe, which others would have to be the *Criterium by which*; or Reaſon, according to many, which is a Faculty of the Underſtanding; all this is equally uncertain. For we cannot know the Faculties of a Nature which is unknown.

The Faculties being unknown, the Actions are ſo no leſs: and in theſe conſiſts the *Criterium according to which*. I have not undertook to relate every Thing here which makes for this *Subject*, for we have more Buſineſs upon our Hands, than to inſiſt long on the ſame *Topicks*: eſpecially ſeeing few are ignorant, of what has been accuſtomed to be ſaid in the Schools of *Philoſophy* on the *Deception* of the Senſes, and of the Underſtanding: for there is Nothing that the *Academicks* and *Scepticks* do value themſelves more upon. I ſhall propoſe ſome Arguments only, which ſap all the Credit that can be given to *Rules* of *Truth* or CRITERIUM.

Since to know *Truth*, we muſt have a *Criterium*, or *Rule* of *Truth*, it is neceſſary to find it, before we ſearch for the Knowledge of *Truth*. Now to find this CRITERIUM, we muſt know how to diſcover the true CRITERIUM of Falſhood.

Falſhood. For that End we ought to enquire before-hand, whether the true CRITERIUM has certain Characters of Truth, by which we may, and without which we cannot know *Truth*. And how ſhall we know thoſe Characters of Truth, if we know not *Truth*? We muſt then have found *Truth* before we can find the CRITERIUM, and muſt have found the CRITERIUM before we can find TRUTH; and ſince we have neither found *Truth* nor the CRITERIUM, it follows that we cannot find one nor the other.

Beſides, ſince the CRITERIUM is the *Rule* of *Truth*; we muſt have adjuſted this *Rule*, and be aſſured that it is right, before we apply it to Truth; for if it is not right, and we are not certain it is ſo, it will not be ſafe, and we cannot confide in it. Now we know not how to adjuſt it, nor be aſſured it is right, if we have not another *Rule* of *Truth*, which is certainly true, and which may ſerve to rectify the firſt. This ſecond to be well rectified, muſt be regulated on a third, and this third on a fourth, and ſo to Infinity. Theſe Matters have been explained at large by the *Philoſopher Sextus Empiricus*, a Man of Subtilty and Penetration, who has

better humbled the Pride of the *Dogmatiſts* than any one. But I am ſatisfied to touch the Thing ſummarily.

## CHAP. IX.

### The EIGHTH PROOF.

1. *Arguments againſt Evidence.* 2. *The Objects which preſent themſelves to the Minds of thoſe who are aſleep, drunk or mad, are as evident as thoſe that are preſent to the Minds of Men, who are awake, faſting, and in their right Senſes.*

*Arguments againſt Evidence.*

1. ALL thoſe who boaſt of being able to obtain the Knowledge of *Truth*, by means of a *Rule* of *Truth*, or CRITERIUM, agree that beſides this, it is neceſſary to have an evident and diſtinct Perception of Things, either by the Senſes, or Reaſon, or ſome other Way, whatever it may be; ſo that the Underſtanding to comprehend any Thing, has Need of a diſtinct and evident *Idea* of it. This is the Language of all the *Dogmatiſts*; wherein they don't perceive, that thereby they render the Knowledge of

of *Truth* ſtill more difficult, and inſtead of one CRITERIUM, require two; namely the *Idea* of the Thing, and the Evidence of that *Idea*. But if we admit there is no CRITERIUM, as I have now proved, it follows that *Evidence* which depends on CRITERIUM, will have no Being. Add to this, that Nothing is evident but what is ſo to all the World. For if no-Body will receive for evident, but what appears ſo to him, true and falſe will be equally evident; for each of thoſe who ſhall have contrary Opinions, will alledge *Evidence* for Proof of his Opinion; and Nothing is ſo evident as to appear ſo to all, and by Conſequence there is no *Evidence*.

Wherein we cannot wonder enough at the Imprudence of thoſe *Philoſophers*, who boaſting they have *Evidence* with them, do not ſee what is moſt evident; namely; that the *Evidence* is fallacious, which equally undertakes the Defence of oppoſite Sides, and lends its Aſſiſtance to each againſt the other; and that we can never reap any Advantage from this Aſſiſtance, till ſuch time as *Philoſophers* agree, and all unite in one and the ſame Sect. Can any-Body have Preſumption enough, how clear and diſtinct ſoever his Notions may be, to be-

lieve that he is the only wiſe Man in the World, and all others are Fools? Does not *Evidence* frequently deceive one and the ſame Perſon, who finds a thing evidently falſe in his advanced Years, which appeared to him to be evidently true in his Youth?

Let us hear what *Sophocles* ſays: (*a*) *never did two Men who were Friends, nor two People in Alliance, continue in the ſame Sentiments. For the one ſooner, the other later, finds the ſame Things ſweet and bitter.* Let us add theſe Words of *Terence*: (*b*) *Never did Man ſo well regulate his Life by Reaſon, but the State of Things, Time and Uſe, offered him Somewhat of new Inſtruction, making him perceive he was ignorant of what he thought he knew, and ſenſible that what he had believed to be moſt deſirable, ought to be rejected.* But of all *Evidences*, which ſhall we follow? Shall it be that of Infancy, Manhood, or advanced Age? *Dionyſius* of *Heraclea*, who overcome by Pain, paſſed from the Sect of the *Stoicks* to that of the *Epicureans*, and was therefore ſirnamed the *Turn-Coat*, whilſt he ſtuck to the *Stoical* Party did he find Obſcurity and Confuſion in all things? 2. I

(*a*) *Sophocl. Ædip. Tyr.* verſ. 639, & ſeq. (*b*) *Terent. Adelph.* Sc. 4. Act. 5.

2. I ſay moreover, that what appears to the Mind in Sleep, Drunkenneſs, and Madneſs, has not leſs *Evidence*, than what appears to us while we are awake, faſting and in our right Senſes. When Men awake, when their Drunkenneſs is over, or when recover'd of Madneſs, they acknowledge indeed they were then in Error, but did not perceive it at all in the time of Sleep, Wine or Diſtraction. We doubt likewiſe ſometimes in ſleeping, whether we are awake, or aſleep; and after we have reflected on it, believe we are awake, and ſee with perfect Evidence, what appears then to the Mind.

*The Objects which preſent themſelves to the Minds of thoſe who are aſleep, drunk, or mad, are as evident as thoſe which are preſent to the Minds of Men who are awake, faſting and in their right Senſes.*

That mad-Man of *Argos*, who imagin'd he was at a Play, and clapp'd his Hands before an empty Theatre, did he not believe he clearly ſaw and heard the Geſture and Recital of the Players? The Extravagancies of the diſtracted, their Fears, Flights, Tranſports, are not thoſe Indications of a Spirit evidently and violently agitated by the *Images* of Things which preſent themſelves to it? Have not Perſons anſwered directly to Queſtions put to them? Others made very fine Verſes, and ſome walked on the Tops of Houſes with great Caution when aſleep? which they could not have

have done, had they not been excited by the cleareſt *Ideas*? Thoſe who believe they aſſiſt in the nocturnal Aſſemblies of *Sorcerers*, have they not the moſt clear *Ideas* of Things very falſe and frivolous? and who being awake, will not acknowledge that they were aſleep, when thoſe *Viſions* paſſed through their Minds; and think they ſaw them ſo certainly as to imagine thoſe who contradict them, to be aſleep themſelves, or not in their right Senſes.

Since the *Images* which preſent themſelves to us in Sleep, how clear ſoever they may appear, are nevertheleſs moſt falſe, how can we know, whether our being awake is not another Kind of Sleep, during which the *Images* of Things that appear to our Minds, whatever Light they may be inveſted with, are notwithſtanding vain and falſe? *Plato* in his *Theætetus* has formed this Doubt as I have done. Thoſe are very much deceived, who think they have found a ſure Sign, to diſcover the Falſity of Dreams; namely, in that they have no Relation to the Things, we have done when awake: For if by Chance they have Relation thereto, there will be no Sign which may ſerve to diſtinguiſh them. But it

may

may very easily fall out that there may be a Relation between them. As for Example; if I dream when asleep, that I rehearse to my Friends the same Things I told them the Day before, and that the Barking of a Dog interrupted my Recital; the next Day, when Sleep has left me, I shall be in Doubt whether the Barking of that Dog interrupted the Recital I made being awake, or asleep. As we often happen to doubt, whether certain Things did really befall us, or we did but dream so. But if on the other hand, our Dreams have no Relation with what we have done when awake, why should we believe the Things we thought in sleep, are false, rather than those we thought, when awake? For since they equally disagree, and this Discord is the Mark of Falsity, the one ought not to be more suspected of Falsity than the other.

It is agreed that the Views of our Understanding are formed by the Impulse of the Brain, and the Motion of Fibres and Spirits. From hence it follows that the *Evidence* of the *Images* which are presented to my Mind, (being Nothing but a certain Manner, or *Modification* of those Images) comes from the same Cause, as the *Images* them-

themſelves. If we grant this Point, which cannot be conteſted, it muſt be likewiſe allowed that the Brain may be moved, and the Spirits and the Fibres agitated alike, as well by internal Cauſes, as by outward *Objects*. From whence we muſt conclude, that *Evidence* may be found in Things falſe, as well as true; and that the *Evidence* of what is true bears no Marks, whereby we can diſtinguiſh it from the *Evidence* of what is falſe. And theſe Marks can be had no where elſe, if it be as the Defenders of *Evidence* maintain, that what is evident is ſelf-evident, and has no Need of Proofs from without.

For otherwiſe to know *Evidence*, we muſt have Need of another *Evidence*, as we have of external Light, to ſee Light. Suppoſe a Man carries ſeveral *Pieces* of Mony in a Bag, and all *Braſs*, except one of Silver; and the Poor apprized of it, ſhould beg the *Pieces* of Money, every one of them hoping that the *Piece* of Silver might fall to his Lot; let the Owner of this Bag and theſe *Pieces* thereupon make a Diſtribution in the Dark, can either of theſe Petitioners know whether he has received the *Piece* of Silver, or whether it was drawn out of the Bag

or not? and if any one of them conſecturing by the Sound of his *Piece*, or Obſervations he might make by handling it, or by other frivolous Tokens, ſhould believe he knew certainly, and declare openly that he had the Silver *Piece*, he would be ridiculous. The other Indigents will be ſo no leſs, if each of them has the ſame Opinion of his own *Piece*, and believes that all the reſt are deceived; and this Controverſy cannot be decided but in the Light.

Such is the Error of the *Dogmatiſts*. In the thick Darkneſs of Ignorance, each of them handles his *Piece* of *Braſs*, and not one of them but boaſts he has by infallible Signs diſcovered, that his *Piece* is the only and precious *Piece*, i. e. *Truth*, which he has received of God, the Diſpenſer of all Good, and attributes to himſelf a diſtinct and evident Perception, more clear than the Light of the Sun at Noon Day; is perſwaded that all others in Error, who have the ſame Opinion of their *Pieces* of Money; and will never acknowledge that his ſo much boaſted *Evidence* is Nothing but Darkneſs, 'till Light ſhall be imparted to him from ſome other Quarter.

CHAP.

## CHAP. X.

### The NINTH PROOF.

1. *Reaſon to doubt of all Things, propoſed by* DES-CARTES; *namely that we are ignorant whether God has not made us of ſuch a Nature, as to be always deceived.* 2. *From whence it follows that our intimate Perception of Things is dubious.*

*Reaſon to doubt of all Things propoſed by* Des-Cartes; *namely, that we are ignorant whether God has not made us of ſuch a Nature, as to be always deceived.*

1. DES-CARTES ſupplies us with another Reaſon to doubt when he ſays in the Beginning of his *Meditations* and *Principles*, (*a*) *that we cannot tell whether God has not made us of ſuch a Nature, as to be always deceived in Things which appear to us to be moſt clear.* This *Doubt* was worthy of a *Philoſopher*, if he who propoſed it, had taken Care to explain it. When I ſay a *Philoſopher*, I don't mean a Chriſtian *Philoſopher*, who knows that (*b*) *God lighteth every Man that*

(*a*) *Cartes. Medit.* 1, & 6. *Princip.* Part. 1. 75, & 13.
(*b*) Joh. xix.

*comet*

*cometh into the World.* But *Des-Cartes* ſpoke then as a *Philoſopher*, and not as a *Chriſtian*. And he who could ſuppoſe there is no *God*, (*c*) might as well ſuppoſe *God* created Men ſo as to be always deceived. But when he ſets up for a new Inventer of Truth, having begun the *Syſtem* of his *Philoſophy* by *Doubt*, and propoſed Reaſons for that *Doubt*, immediately after, as if the Way to *Truth* had been opened to him from Heaven, he ſo abſolutely ceaſes to doubt, that he does not ſo much as give himſelf the Trouble, to ſolve thoſe Arguments which had obliged him to doubt.

But this Matter is not to be handled here, it is enough to ſay at preſent, that this *Doubting* is of ſuch Importance, to hinder us from receiving any *Propoſition* as certain, while we make Uſe of Nothing but our Reaſon, that *Des-Cartes* has been ſo far from deſtroying it, that it cannot be deſtroyed, if Reaſon does not borrow Aſſiſtance from *Faith*. For let any one be convinced that Man is an *Animal* ſo formed by Nature, that what appears to him to be true, is falſe; all you ſhall propoſe againſt this Opi-

(*c*) *Cartes. Princip.* Part. 1. 7.

nion, will appear to him to be falſe or true; if falſe, he will juſtly reject it; if true, believing himſelf to be ſo made, he will ſtill be obliged to reject it as falſe. Thus it will be eaſie for him to ſubvert all Reaſons that can be objected againſt his Opinion: and we cannot invent one, which will not fall under this general Law, that what appears to a Man to be of moſt Truth, is moſt falſe.

*From whence it follows, that the intimate Perception of Things is dubious.*

2. As to the reſt, all I have alledged already, and principally that Reaſon of doubting all Things propoſed by *Des-Cartes*, utterly overthrows the ſtrong Hold in which the *Dogmatiſts* confide, when they affirm we have a certain intimate Knowledge of many Things; which though not founded on Reaſon, is nevertheleſs certain and evident; that ſuch is the Knowledge of firſt *Principles*; the Knowledge I have that I am at this preſent awake; they ſay though theſe Things cannot be proved by Reaſoning, we conceive notwithſtanding by ſome intimate Perception, that they are certain. For if Nature has formed me in ſuch Manner, that what appears to me to be moſt true, ſhall be moſt falſe, when I believe I know, and feel by an intimate Perception, that the *whole* is greater than a *Part*, or that

I am awake: I muſt believe that this is falſe, if I will adhere to that Reaſon of doubting propoſed by *Des-Cartes*.

## CHAP. XI.

### The TENTH PROOF.

*'Tis begging the Queſtion, to attempt to prove by Reaſon, that Reaſon is certain.*

WE have yet another Proof as valid as the former, to make the Weakneſs of Reaſon appear. What Argument ſoever we form to defend Reaſon, is a Production of Reaſon. But it can produce Nothing which will be abſolutely certain. Whatever Proof then I can invent to defend the Certainty of Reaſon, will be uncertain. It is therefore begging the *Queſtion*, to defend Reaſon by Reaſon: for the Arguments propoſed for that End, as certain and true, are derived from Reaſon; which is the very Thing in *Queſtion*; namely, whether it can produce Certainty and Truth.

## CHAP. XII.

### The ELEVENTH PROOF.

*Reaſoning uncertain.*

I Muſt now harden my Forehead, and ſince I have begun to doubt, muſt doubt in good Earneſt when the *Dogmatiſts* are to be reduced to deſpair. Whatever Proof they bring againſt me, they do it by Reaſoning. I ſhall not here call in the Authority of many *Philoſophers*, to whom all the Art of Reaſoning has appeared dubious, uncertain, and fallacious: who have maintained that the Rules of *Logick*, are Snares and Fetters we cannot get clear off, which make what is conſtantly falſe ſeem true, and conclude from thence that we muſt be mad to give Faith to that which ſo frequently deceives us.

To be more intelligible. Let any one propoſe to me an Argument which our Adverſaries hold for moſt certain and unqueſtionable, I am ready to ſhew it

t to be moſt uncertain, and of no Ef-
fect at all. They would prove for In-
ſtance that *Peter* is a rational Animal:
See how they reaſon. Every Man is a
ational Animal; *Peter* is a Man, there-
ore *Peter* is a rational Animal. The
irſt of theſe *Propoſitions* being univer-
al, does principally paſs for true, be-
auſe every Man in particular is a rati-
nal Animal. For having obſerved that
his Man is a rational Animal, and that,
nd the next, and we have never ſeen
ny Man who was not a rational Ani-
al: out of the Maſs of theſe particu-
r *Propoſitions*, which declare every
an to be a rational Animal, this uni-
erſal *Propoſition* was formed; *viz.*
very Man is a rational Animal: from
hence it follows that the Certainty of
is univerſal *Propoſition*, depends on
e Certainty of all thoſe particular *Pro-*
*ſitions*.

But in the Reaſoning we now call to
ccount, the Certainty of the particular
*ropoſition* depends on the Certainty of
e univerſal; for from every Man be-
g a rational Animal, it is concluded
at *Peter* is ſo; thus we fall into that
cious Reaſoning called a Circle.
eſides, ſince *Des-Cartes* believed and
aintained, that *God* can change the

*Eſſence* of Things, and make them not to be what they are, *viz.* that the Number twenty ſhall be not compoſed of two tens, that a Man may not be a rational Animal, (I don't now examine the Truth of theſe Propoſitions) it is poſſible a Man may be found who is not a rational Animal; and therefore that firſt univerſal *Propoſition*, every Man is a rational Animal, will not be true.

This Example may ſuffice to make us doubt the Certainty of all other Reaſonings: and to this the Proofs given of it by conſummate *Philoſophers* engage us. I touch theſe Matters but ſuperficially here. To be wiſe, I ought not to give Credit lightly to Reaſonings whoſe Falſity I have ſo often experienced. Being in this Diſpoſition, if I am to be attacked by a Company of *Dogmatiſts*, what Arms will they take to oppoſe me with, while under the Safe-guard of my Doubts and Diffidences? The beſt they can uſe, will be thoſe Reaſonings called *Demonſtrations*. For whatever Proof they produce, will be invalid, if not reduced into Form of Argument. Now there is no Argument which falls not under this Obligation of Doubting

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## CHAP. XIII.

### The TWELFTH PROOF.

*From the Diſſentions of the Dogmatiſts, it follows that we muſt not adhere to any of their Sects.*

THE Diſſentions of the *Dogmatiſts*, will furniſh us moreover with a very good Proof to refute them. And 't's this very Proof the Phyſicians, ſirnamed *Empiricks*, raiſe againſt the Phyſicians who make Uſe of Reaſoning, nd are therefore call'd *Rationaliſts*, or Reaſoners. If Nothing has ever been ffirmed by one *Dogmatiſt*, which has ot been denied by another; if they ever advanced any Opinion which has ot been conteſted, what Confidence an we place in their Affirmations, ſeeng other *Dogmatical Philoſophers* of qual Pride do not ſubmit to them?

Let us run through their ſeveral ects; each of them will boldly lay Claim to Truth, have its own Approation only, and be rejected by the Suf-

frages of all the reſt. Will it then become a wiſe Man, to follow one Party, which is not approved but by that alone, and is condemned by many?

## CHAP. XIV.

### The THIRTEENTH PROOF.

*The Law of doubting eſtabliſhed by excellent Philoſophers.* 1. *by* Anacharſis 2. Pherecydes. 3. Pythagoras. 4 Empedocles. 5. Gorgias Leontin. 6 Xenophanes. 7. Epicharmus. 8. Parmenides. 9. Xeniades. 10. Zeno Elea. 11. Heraclitus. 12. Anaxagora 13. Democritus. 14. Protagoras. 1 Socrates. 16. Plato, *Author of the fir Academy.* 17. Ariſtotle. 18. Arceſ las, *Author of the ſecond Academy.* 1 Lacydes. 20. Carneades, *Author the third Academy.* 21. Clitomachu 22. Philo, *Author of the fourth Ac demy.* 23. Antiochus, *Author of t fifth Academy.* 24. Cicero. 25. Va ro, Piſo, Lucullus, *and* Brutus. 2 *Origin of* Pyrrhoniſm. 27. Metrod rus. 28. Anaxarchus. 29. Pyrrho. 3 *How many Academies there have bee*

*a*

*and the Difference between the Academy and* Pyrrhoniſm. 31. *There have been but two Academies, the old and the new; and the new was a real* Pyrrhoniſm. 32. *The Differences of the new Academy, and the Sect of the Scepticks propoſed, and reconciled. Firſt Difference.* 33. *Second Difference.* 34. *Third Difference.* 35. *Fourth Difference.* 36. *Fifth Difference.* 37. *Sixth Difference.* 38. *Seventh Difference.* 39. *Why Philoſophers who make Profeſſion of doubting, had rather paſs for* Academicks *than* Pyrrhonians. 40. *It's falſe to ſay that the Sect of the* Scepticks, *or* Pyrrhonians, *was interrupted after* Timon. 41. Timon *of* Phlius. 42. Nauſiphanes *of* Teos. 43. Theodoſius *of* Bithynia. 44. Æneſidemus *of* Cnoſſus. 45. Ptolemæus *of* Alexandria. 46. Cornelius Celſus. 47. Phavorinus. 48. Sextus Empiricus. 49. viz. *If* Sextus Empiricus *was the ſame as* Sextus Chæroneus. 50. *Great Affinity between the* Sceptick, Empirick, *and* Methodick *Sect.* 51. Lucian. 52. Uranius. 53. *And a great many more of the* Dogmatiſts, Porphyrius. 54. Ariſtippus, Ariſto *of* Chio. 55. Herillus *of* Carthage. 56. Menedemus *of* Eretria.

57. *The* Eretrick *and* Megarick *Philoſophers.* 58. Monimus *the Cynick.* 59. *Among the remote Nations, the* Magi. 60. *The* Brachmans. 61. *Certain* Turk *Philoſophers call'd the Aſtoniſh'd.* 62. *Among the* Jews *the* Eſſens. 63. *And the* Seboreans. 64. R. Moſes *the Son of* Maimonides. 65. *And among the* Arabians *the Diſcourſers.*

*The Law of doubting eſtabliſhed by excellent Philoſophers.*

LEarned and intelligent Perſons acknowledging with what Darkneſs human Underſtanding, with what profound Night the Things which ſurround Man are covered, and obſerving at the ſame time, that the principal Cauſes of the Errors to which we are ſubject, are to be aſcribed to the Temerity and Precipitation of walking in rugged and intricate Ways, in the midſt of this Darkneſs, with as much Aſſurance as if we marched on even Ground by the Light of the Sun at Noon-Day, have thought it requiſite to moderate themſelves, and check this inconſiderate Impetuoſity.

After they had maſter'd their Minds, and brought them to reflect, they ſhook off their Prejudices: carefully examined the Nature of their Bodies, of their Un-

Underſtanding, and Things without them, obſerving all, trying all; and at laſt diſcovered, the only Way to avoid Error, was to ſuſpend Belief. It is certain this was the *Origin* of *Philoſophy*, this Method of doubting; which wiſe Men took, by the Knowledge they had of the Weakneſs of their Underſtanding. There was then no other Difference between an intelligent Perſon, and one of the groſs Vulgar, a Philoſopher and an Ignorant, but this: the one knew that he knew Nothing, and the other did not know that.

If we run through the Hiſtory of *Philoſophy* from its firſt Riſe to this Time, in ſo great a Diverſity of Opinions, we ſhall find that all thoſe excellent Perſons the Authors of it, if you except a very ſmall number, were agreed in this Point, that *Truth* is hidden, the Senſes and Underſtanding deceitful, weak, and under a profound Ignorance of all Things.

I ſhall not place *Homer* in the Front of them, nor deck my ſelf with his Authority, as the *Scepticks* very readily do, either by following the Cuſtom of Antiquity, which in all Queſtions conſtantly appealed to the Suffrage of *Homer*, or becauſe they knew that *Arceſilas* and *Pyrrho* had *Homer* always in their Hands, and

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and made it their ordinary Reading. Neither will I alledge the ſeven wiſe Men of *Greece*, whoſe Maxims they ſay eſtabliſh'd this Law of doubting. Theſe precarious Authorities, have more Oſtentation than Truth.

Anacharſis. 1. *Anacharſis* maintained, (as has been reported) that there never was a Rule of Truth, or a CRITERIUM, and that Man can comprehend Nothing, and reproved the *Greeks* who were of a contrary Opinion.

Pherecydes 2. As to *Pherecydes*, we muſt all agree that he was of this Sentiment, ſince he has writ there is no *Truth* at all, and that he knew no ſuch thing.

Pythagoras. 3. Such alſo was the Doctrine of *Pythagoras*, and in the Works attributed to him, we find this celebrated Maxim: 'No one ought to deſire any thing, be-'cauſe he knows not what will be beſt 'for him.' Being very well apprized, that Man with all the Application he is capable of, can never arrive to Wiſdom which depends on the Knowledge of *Truth*, he declared to *Leo* Prince of the *Phliaſians*, he poſſeſſed neither Science nor Wiſdom, that God alone enjoys that Happineſs, and boaſted of Nothing but being a Lover of Wiſdom, that is to ſay, *Philoſophy*.

4. *Em-*

4. *Empedocles*, a Diſciple of *Pythagoras*, improved by this Inſtruction; and frequently complained, that the Way of Senſe was too narrow to conduct us to *Truth*. Empedocles.

5. *Gorgias Leontin*, Prince of thoſe formerly called *Sophiſts*, educated in the School of *Empedocles*, compoſed a Book divided into three Parts. In the firſt he ſhewed, that we cannot ſay any Thing exiſts. In the ſecond proved, that ſuppoſing it true that ſome Thing does exiſt, Man cannot comprehend it; having neither for that purpoſe, any Rule of *Truth*, Underſtanding, nor Senſes. And in the third made appear, that although Man may comprehend ſomething, he cannot explain to another what he comprehends. Gorgias Leontin.

6. *Xenophanes*, who is placed in the Number of the *Pythagoreans*, acknowledged likewiſe that we can comprehend Nothing with Certainty; that there is no *Rule* of Truth, no Reaſon, nor Senſe; that all depends on Opinion. And aſſerted this Doctrine with ſo high a hand, that he was thought to be the firſt Inventer of it, although not ſo. Xenophanes.

7. *Epicharmus* in the ſame Liſt, would have us ſuſpend our Judgment and Epicharmus.

and Belief, and pretended that Wiſdom wholly conſiſts therein.

Parmenides. 8. *Parmenides*, to whom *Plato* gave the Sirname of *Great*, called thoſe raſh and arrogant, who believed they had acquired *Science*, ſaying it is above human Capacity.

Xeniades. 9. *Xeniades* the *Corinthian*, aſſerted there is no CRITERIUM, or Rule of Truth; that our *Ideas*, Opinions, and all Things are falſe. *Democritus* makes Mention of this *Xeniades*; and for that Reaſon I can hardly believe, though I dare not deny it, that this was the ſame *Xeniades*, a *Corinthian* likewiſe, who had *Diogenes* for his Slave, and ſurvived him. *Democritus* was elder than *Diogenes*, who died at the Age of fourſcore and ten.

Zeno *of* Elea. 10. *Zeno* the *Eleatick*, is celebrated among thoſe who have taught that we muſt ſuſpend our Belief. He was Author of the *Eleatick* Sect, which *Plato* (*a*) nevertheleſs attributes to *Xenophanes*, and yet will have it to be more ancient than *Xenophanes*.

Heraclitus. 11. *Heraclitus* advanced the ſame Doctrine.

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(*a*) Plato. Sophiſt.

12. As

12. As did likewiſe *Anaxagoras*, who proved that all Things are ſurrounded with Darkneſs. Anaxagoras.

13. *Democritus* taught that the Cauſes of Things are unknown; that there is Nothing true; or if there be any thing ſo, we know it not: that he did not know whether he knew any Thing, or Nothing; whether there be any Thing or Nothing: rejected all Kind of Demonſtrations; and this Maxim is related as his, *viz.* that Truth lies hid in the Bottom of a Well. Democritus.

14. *Protagoras*, one of the Diſciples of *Democritus*, ſirnam'd Wiſdom, ſaid there is no Rule of *Truth*, Nothing true nor falſe, and a great Difference between one Man and another: that what appears to this, does not appear ſo to that; that there is not any Thing more of one ſort than another; having declared there is Nothing upon which we cannot ſpeak *pro* and *con*, and being even uncertain too, whether we can diſpute for and againſt one and the ſame Thing, he was the firſt who eſtabliſh'd the Method of defending two contrary Opinions on the ſame Subject. Protageras.

15. *Socrates*, that illuſtrious Author of the Art of doubting, took the ſame Way Socrates.

Way afterwards, and made it very common. For having obſerved that Men know Nothing, and do not ſo much as know that; openly declared, and made Profeſſion of knowing Nothing; and believed he merited thereby the *Eulogy* given him by *Apollo*, viz. that he was of all Men the moſt wiſe; it being the Perfection of Wiſdom to acknowledge our Ignorance.

We ſee by the Dialogues of *Plato*; that he aſſured Nothing upon any Matter propoſed to him, being ſatisfied with refuting thoſe who had the Temerity to be poſitive. This made his Adverſaries treat him as an Ignorant, and a Fool, ſeeing he was content to interrogate others, without being inclinable to anſwer to any *Queſtions*, and own'd his Ignorance and Incapacity. He addicted himſelf therefore wholly to the Study of Morality, abandoning natural Philoſophy, which had been cultivated by him at firſt very diligently, and which he acknowledged afterwards to exceed the Reach of Man's Underſtanding. As to his own particular, he perceived himſelf to be ſo incapable of knowing Things, that although at firſt he thought he was very ſagacious, and others judged

udged ſo too, yet at laſt he was ſo con-
vinced of the contrary, as to find him-
elf obliged to lay aſide all he had learn-
d. And made Profeſſion of ſuch pro-
ound Ignorance, that he ſays he knew
ot even whether he was a Man, or
omething elſe, nor in ſhort what he
as.

Some have pretended, when he uſed
hat Language, he did not ſpeak ſin-
erely, nor ſeriouſly, but by Irony or
Modeſty, and to diſcountenance the
*ophiſts*, who fooliſhly boaſted they
ere ignorant of Nothing, and ever
repared to diſcourſe upon all Points
nd Matters. If it had been ſo, he
ould not have preſerved ſo conſtant-
y in the publick Acknowledgment of
is Ignorance; eſpecially when he talked
ith his Friends, and with grave and
erious Perſons, and had no Occaſion
o decry the *Sophiſts:* Nor have exa-
nin'd all Things, as he was accuſtomed
o do, conformably to that Doctrine,
nd made ſo falſe an Interpretation, and
o contrary to his own Sentiments, of the
*racle* which gave Teſtimony to his Wiſ-
om. Many Sects of *Philoſophers* were
erived from him, of which the moſt
elebrated, nam'd the *Academy*, follow-
d this Method of doubting all Things,

and

and even augmented and carried it to its higheſt Perfection.

Plato *Author of the firſt Academy.*

16. *Plato*, Father and Inſtitutor of the *Academy*, inſtructed by *Socrates* in the Art of doubting, and declaring himſelf his Follower, conformed to his Way of handling Matters, and undertook to oppoſe all his Predeceſſors. It is not only in the Books call'd his *Gymnaſticks*, but even when he appears to be more affirmative, whether he makes *Socrates* ſpeak or another, and advances Nothing as true, but only as likely to be ſo, he ſtill ſticks to his Maxim, that we muſt leave the Knowledge of *Truth* to the *Gods* and their Offſpring, and be content with the Search of what is probable.

The *Academicks* who ſucceeded *Plato*, endeavoured to fix this *Philoſophy*, which 'till that Time had been libertine and vagrant, and found it ſelf already burthened with the pretended Knowledge of many Things. They formed *Syſtems*, Plans, Rules of Doctrine, and neglecting the Precept of *Socrates* their firſt Maſter, who approved not this Way, eſtabliſhed Laws for teaching and learning; and had even the Aſſurance to advance *Dogma's*.

17. *Ari*

17. *Ariſtotle* nevertheleſs retained theſe uncertain and doubtful Ways of diſputing all Things, and was followed therein by the *Peripateticks* his Proſelytes. We find many Paſſages in his Works, and chiefly in his Books of *Metaphyſicks*; which although they do not deny that there is a Way to *Truth*, will not allow us nevertheleſs to ſearch for it, but in Beginning by *Doubt*, and after they have firſt ſhewed the Difficulty of the Thing. It likewiſe eſcaped him to ſay, that there is no Difference between firm Opinion and *Science*. From whence it follows, that all the Opinions of Men being uncertain, all their *Sciences* are ſo too. Ariſtotle.

18. *Arceſilas* enters the Liſts at length, whom an ancient (*b*) Author elegantly calls the illuſtrious Prince of the *Academy*, who affirms Nothing. He revived that Law of doubting all Things propoſed by *Socrates*, and almoſt loſt in his Time: reſtored the ancient Cuſtom of contradicting every Thing offered in a Diſpute, of ſupporting what was moſt probable, and of never proceeding beyond the beſt Appearance of Likelihood. Nay puſhed Arceſilas, *Author of the ſecond Academy.*

(*b*) *Pompon. Mel.* Lib. 1. Cap. 18.

Matters farther; for having remarked that againſt this Maxim of *Socrates*; viz. *I know no more than that I know Nothing*, one may make this important Objection: that Man may then know ſomewhat, if he knows but this only, *viz.* that he knows Nothing; he would not even receive that Maxim which *Socrates* left, to be as it were ſome Conſolation to human Weakneſs; and pronounced that we do not ſo much as know, whether we know Nothing; that as Nothing is certain, ſo Nature has not given us any *Rule* of *Truth*; (human Underſtanding and Senſes being utterly incapable of comprehending it;) that in all Queſtions there are oppoſite Reaſons to be found of equal Validity, one Thing being neither more true nor probable than another; that all is involved in Darkneſs; and therefore we are not to admit nor affirm any Thing, but always ſuſpend our Aſſent. Accordingly he never declared his Opinion, not ſo much as allowing we ſhould have Opinions. And if any one propoſed and maintained one of his own, oppoſed it with great Decency and Politeneſs, and no leſs Wit and Subtilty.

But after all, this very Man, who when he acted the *Philoſopher* would not

not conſent that one Thing was more true or probable than another, in the common Uſage of Life followed what appeared to him to have moſt Probability. Mean Time in practiſing and maintaining this Method of *Philoſophy*, his great Modeſty would not permit him to ſay that he was the Author or Inventor of it, but aſcribed it to *Socrates*, *Plato*, *Parmenides*, and *Heraclitus*. *Arceſilas* was notwithſtanding drawn to this Party by *Pyrrho*, to whom he adhered having abandoned *Theophraſtus*, *Crantor*, *Diodorus* and *Menedemus*.

He was then a true *Pyrrhonian*, and the *Pyrrhonians* placed him in the Number of the *Scepticks*, and of their own Sect; although he did not reject the Title of an *Academick:* and muſt then be eſteemed not only the Reſtorer, but moreover as the Reformer of the Doctrine of *Socrates*, and the ancient *Academy*. It was he who gave Birth to the new *Academy*, which is built on more ſolid Foundations than the old: had many Diſciples, but his Doctrine notwithſtanding was not at firſt very well reliſhed, becauſe he ſeemed to be for extinguiſhing all the Light of *Science*, for throwing Darkneſs into the

Mind, and ſubverting all Foundations of *Philoſophy*.

Lacydes. 19. *Lacydes* was the only Perſon who defended the Doctrine of *Arceſilas*, and tranſmitted it to *Evander* his Diſciple with many others. *Evander* to *Hegeſimus*, and *Hegeſimus* to *Carneades*.

Carneades, *Author of the third Academy.* 20. *Carneades* nevertheleſs did not follow the Doctrine of *Arceſilas* in all Things, but retained the greater Part, and the Main of it. From hence he was ſtiled the Author of the new *Academy*, called the third. Without ever dicovering his own Sentiments, he oppoſed with great Wit and Eloquence, all Opinions that came before him. For to the Study of *Philoſophy*, he brought an admirable Share of good Parts, a truſty Memory, great Facility of Speaking, and a long Uſe of *Logick*. A great Concourſe went to hear him, and when the *Athenians* deputed him to go to the *Roman* Senate on Affairs of Importance, and aſſigned him *Critolaus* the *Peripatetick*, and *Diogenes* the *Stoick* for his Aſſociates, *Philoſophers* of great Renown, he was very favourably received there.

It was then they began at *Rome* to know the Charms of *Eloquence*, and

the Worth of *Philoſophy*. The flouriſhing Youth of that Common-wealth, who thought of obtaining the Empire of the World, allured by the Novelty and Excellence of that noble *Science*, which *Carneades* profeſſed, followed him with ſo much Eagerneſs, that *Cato*, a Man otherwiſe of excellent Judgment, but rough, a little ſavage, and wanting in thoſe Decencies which polite Learning inſpires; as the *Romans* generally were in his Age, ſuſpecting this new Kind of Erudition, that perſuaded and carried all before it, adviſed the Senate to grant theſe *Deputies* what they asked, and diſmiſs them ſpeedily with Honour.

It is true *Carneades* overthrew whatever he undertook to oppoſe, and remained invincible in the Opinions he maintained. In ſo much that the *Stoicks*, a contentious Race and ſubtil in Diſpute, with whom both he and *Arceſilas* had frequently Conteſts, could hardly defend themſelves againſt him: eſpouſed, as I have ſaid, the Doctrine of *Arceſilas*, if we except ſome Points, on which they did not agree, as concerning a *Rule* of *Truth*, Incomprehenſibility, Things which are uncertain, and Suſpenſion of Belief.

Brought many new Confirmations on this Matter, but all reducible notwithſtanding to maintain there is no ſure *Rule* of *Science*; that we can comprehend Nothing, but in all Things ought to follow Probability; that all Laws and Cuſtoms were eſtabliſhed by the Opinions of Men, and by Nature; that we live in ſo great Ignorance of *Truth*, and Obſcurity in all Things, as will not admit even of thoſe *Principles*, of which the Light of Nature ſeems to make us ſee the Reality. As for Example; that two Things are equal between themſelves, when equal to a third. The *Stoicks* to whom he was an Adverſary, ſaid to leſſen his Reputation that he objected Nothing againſt them, of which he himſelf was the Inventor, but took his Objections out of the Books of *Chryſippus* the *Stoick:* being modeſt enough to agree to it, he ſaid that without the Help of *Chryſippus* he could have done Nothing; and that he beat *Chryſippus* with his own Weapons.

'Tis true that *Chryſippus* willing to demoliſh this Law of doubting, and Suſpenſion of the *Academicks*, produced all Arguments, not only thoſe they were accuſtomed to defend themſelves by, but moreover all they could poſſibly

bly make Uſe of. But when he came to deſtroy theſe Arguments, and had forgot Nothing which might conduce to it, it might eaſily appear, how much ſuperior the Cauſe of the *Academicks* was to that of the *Stoicks*, ſince the declared Enemy of the *Academicks* being armed with their Reaſons, appeared much ſtronger, than when he firſt undertook to refute them. Thus *Chryſippus* ſuffer'd by his own Strength, and out of his Arſenal *Carneades* was furniſhed with Artillery to overcome him.

21. *Carneades* enjoyed his Glory a long Time, and had excellent Men for his Diſciples: Among others *Clitomachus*, a *Carthaginian*, who already inſtructed in the *Philoſophy* of his own Country, and afterwards in the *Greek Philoſophy* by *Carneades*, aſſiſted him in the Eſtabliſhment of the third *Academy*, and at length ſucceeded him. He was of great Capacity, ſtudious and diligent, and having continued a conſiderable Time with *Carneades*, who had never writ any Thing, he took Care to collect all his Diſcourſes, Acts, and Thoughts. But could never dive into the Opinion of *Carneades* in certain Points notwithſtanding. Clitomachus.

Such was the Effect of long Cuſtom *Carneades* had perſiſted in, never to aſ-

ſure any Thing, even to his moſt intimate Familiars. As to the reſt, there was no Diverſity of Opinion between them; for *Clitomachus* concurred with him, that we ſhould ſuſpend our Belief, becauſe we can comprehend Nothing, and in the Conduct of Life, have Regard only to Probabilities, provided we do not give our Belief and Aſſent to them: There being many Things probable which are fallacious no leſs, and have not any Signature of Truth that may not be met with in thoſe which are abſolutely falſe: He advanced not this Doctrine as peculiar to himſelf, but as held by the *Academy*. He writ four Books of the Neceſſity of ſuſpending Belief. I wiſh they had come to our Hands.

Philo, *Author of the fourth* Academy.

22. *Philo* was a Diſciple of *Clitomachus*, who for dropping certain Points of the Opinions of *Carneades*, and *Clitomachus*, deſerves to be called with *Charmides* the Founder of the fourth *Academy*. For he ſaid Things are comprehenſible in themſelves; but nevertheleſs that we cannot comprehend them, by any Faculty which Nature has given us, to ſee perfectly into the *Objects*, whoſe *Ideas* offer themſelves to our Minds: And accordingly can comprehend Nothing.

23. *An-*

23. *Antiochus* was the Founder of the fifth *Academy*. A Diſciple of *Philo* for many Years, and upheld the Doctrine of *Carneades*, being ſubtil and polite; but at laſt left the Party of thoſe his Maſters in the Declenſion of his Days, whether engaged to it by the Perſwaſions of *Mneſarchus* the *Stoick*, whoſe Lectures he had alſo heard; or could not reſiſt the continual Perſecutions of the *Dogmatiſts*; or laſtly whether ſtimulated by ſome ſecret Vanity, he affected to be Author of a Sect, and to have Diſciples call'd after his Name *Antiochians*: Boaſted notwithſtanding of his being returned to the ancient *Academy*, although in Effect he was gone over to the Sect of the *Stoicks*. But tried to waſh out the Stain of Levity, being ſo fully ſatisfy'd that the Name of the *Academy* would be to his Honour, that he was for perſwading others he came out from thence.

Antiochus. *Author of the fifth* Academy.

He then made the Tenets of the *Stoicks*, which he attributed to *Plato*, paſs in the *Academy*, aſſerting that the *Doctrine* of the *Stoicks* was not new, but a Reformation of the old *Academy*. Publiſhed alſo a Work againſt *Philo* his Maſter, or rather againſt himſelf. For that very Doctrine which was oppoſed by him in his advanced Age, he had long taught, and learnedly defended. Confirmed

firmed likewiſe thereby the Doctrine of the new *Academy*, which he undertook to confute; ſhewing by his Inconſtancy, what little Dependance there is on the Judgments of Men for the Knowledge of *Truth*, and how far they are from being aſcertained, whether they can know any Thing or no. This fifth *Academy* was Nothing then but a Conjunction of the old *Academy*, and the *Philoſophy* of the *Stoicks*, or rather the real *Philoſophy* of the *Stoicks*, bearing the Appendages and Titles of the ancient *Academy*; I mean that which flouriſhed betwixt *Plato* and *Arceſilas*. For the *Stoicks* had with *Antiochus* abandoned the Law of doubting, whoſe Doctrines are preſerved, and whom we ſee to have been neither a true *Platonick*, nor Follower of *Socrates*.

Cicero. 24. This *Philo* I have ſpoke of, neceſſitated to leave *Athens* in the War of *Mithridates*, retired to *Rome*, and had *Cicero* for a Diſciple. He exactly taught him the whole Syſtem of the new *Academy*. After which *Cicero* coming to *Athens*, was inſtructed ſix Months by *Antiochus*, in the Precepts of the old *Academy*. Even when engaged in honourable Employments of the Republick he did not in the leaſt relinquiſh the Study of *Philoſophy*, and his Houſe was the

Re-

Reception of the firſt Rate *Philoſophers* of that Time.

He long adhered to the Doctrine of the old *Academy*, after it was made known to him by the Inſtitution of *Antiochus*. But at length Reflections, Study, and Acquaintance with the World, having improved his Learning, he returned to the *Philoſophy* of *Philo*; and was the Reverſe of what happened to *Antiochus*, who left the new *Academy* to return to the old: For *Cicero* paſſed from the latter to the former, which he explained and ſupported by Writings we cannot ſufficiently eſteem. He uſed the Liberty allowed him by this Sect with ſo little Reſerve, that he made no Scruple of changing his Opinion, as Occaſion offered, ſaying he was at his Liberty, and followed what appeared to him moſt probable: He often, and that publickly, recommended the Manner of the *Academicks Philoſophizing*, as modeſt, commodious, polite, and conſtant; fearing not to declare, that we can ſay Nothing ſo extravagant, which has not been aſſerted by ſome *Philoſopher*.

25. *Varro* expreſſed himſelf with more Severity, ſaying that Nothing ſo ſtrange can enter into a delirious Head, which ſome *Philoſopher* has not ventured to advance.

Varro, Piſo, Lucullus, *and* Brutus.

advance. This Man, the moſt Learned of the *Romans*, was imbued with the Precepts of *Antiochus*, and I make no Doubt but in the Satire intitled *Eumenides*, where he undertook to prove all Men mad, many Proofs were acumulated to ſhew, there is no Knowledge of *Truth* in human Minds.

*Piſo* alſo received Leſſons from *Antiochus*, as did many others, and principally *Lucullus*, ſo illuſtrious for the great Things he produced by the Elegancy of his Genius, and Proficiency in polite Learning. Being Queſtor, and after that General of the Army, he took Care to be always accompanied by *Antiochus*, who made him ſo zealous a Stickler for the ancient *Academy*; as *Ariſtus* Brother of *Antiochus*, engaged *Brutus* in the ſame Sect, a Man of the greateſt Merit. Theſe with all other Diſciples of *Antiochus*, kept themſelves within the Bounds of that old *Academy*. 'Twas then the Study of *Philoſophy* flouriſhed at *Rome*, while the *Academy* was almoſt deſerted even in *Greece*; oppreſſed by the Arms of the *Romans*, and continually harraſſed by the Troubles of War they thought much more of their own Safety, than of the Search of *Truth*.

26. Now

26. Now this Art of doubting correctly, which not only makes Profeſſion of Ignorance, but of being even ignorant of our Ignorance, had made a great Progreſs before *Arceſilas*. *The Origin of* Pyrrhoniſm.

27. For *Metrodorus* of *Chio*, who came out of the School of *Democritus*, or as ſome pretend from that of *Naſſa*, and who was of the Iſle of *Chio* too, inſtructed by *Protagoras*, Diſciple of *Democritus*, in the Front of his Treatiſe of Nature, affixed this Maxim; none of us know any Thing, and we are not even ſure, whether we know any Thing, or Nothing. This made it be ſaid, that he had ſubverted all *Rule* of Truth, named CRITERIUM. Metrodorus.

28. *Anaxarchus* did the ſame, an *Abderite*, Defender of the Doctrine of *Democritus*; ſirnamed *Eudæmonicus*, for the Steadineſs of his Courage, and the Caſineſs of his Manners. This procured him great Eſteem from *Alexander* whom he attended. He diſown'd, as I have ſaid, all *Rule* of Truth, affirming we cannot comprehend Things by our Underſtanding, but as Idiots, or thoſe who are aſleep; that *Objects* in the Manner they repreſent themſelves to our Minds, are like Pictures which ſhew a Reſemblance, but not Things them- Anaxarchus.

themſelves; in ſhort that we know No thing, and even know not that we know Nothing. Which he had from *Metro dorus*.

Pyrrho. 29. The Art of doubting was then almoſt in its Perfection, and human Un derſtanding convinced of its Weakneſs when *Pyrrho*, Native of the City o *Elis*, gave the finiſhing Stroke to tha Art. For having read the Books of *De mocritus* and *Metrodorus*, he afterward followed *Anaxarchus* into the *Indies* had Conferences with the *Magi*, an *Gymnoſophiſts*; and on his Return to hi own Country, propoſed a more perfec Kind of Incomprehenſibility, which th *Greeks* call *Acatalepſis*. For obſervin with great Penetration, that the Anci ents after they had acknowledged thei Ignorance in all Things, and their Igno rance even of that Ignorance, retaine notwithſtanding a Manner of *Philoſo phizing*, which ſeemed to allow ſom *Sciences* as certain, and uſed ſome Affir mations; this made him aſſume a new Form, that put him out of the Reac of all the Prevarications of the *Dogma tiſts*. 'Tis true he left Nothing in Writ ing; but had Diſciples, who took Car to preſerve his Doctrine in Books, o which

which ſome have been tranſmitted even to us, and are kept in their Integrity.

This will excuſe us from being more particular. It is enough to ſay the *Pyrrhonians* admitted no *Rule*, no Reaſoning, no Sign to diſcover *Truth*; affirmed, defined, determined Nothing; believed not that any Thing was rather this, than another; what ever Reaſons were propoſed to them, they found other of equal Validity to ſupport the contrary; preferred no one Reaſon, maintained there is Nothing true, that all Things are done by Cuſtom, and even when they advanced theſe Propoſitions, aſſured them not, but ſaid they did it only by a Spirit of Controverſy. For *Pyrrho* oppoſed all the Opinions of other Sects, proving we are to reject them, not exempting his own from this Law, which he believed to be no more certain, nor receivable, than any of the reſt: And when he aſſerted we can comprehend Nothing, pretended not to comprehend even that, as being a Propoſition equally incomprehenſible.

Therefore as to this univerſal Propoſition, that we can comprehend Nothing, he excepted not the Propoſition itſelf; and compared it to a Medicine which out of our Bodies does not expel hurtful

ful and ſuperfluous Humours only, but itſelf alſo with the reſt. Deſpairing of knowing *Truth*, he ſtood to Appearances, and to ſupply the Place of a *Criterium*, or Rule of Truth in the Uſe of Life; would have us follow Laws, Cuſtoms, and natural Sentiments, but without forming Judgments or Opinions.

By this Method he accidentally obtained that Tranquility of Mind he fought for, and hoped to find in the Study of Nature. And becauſe thoſe Senſations we have from without, called *Evils*; as Cold, Hunger, Thirſt, and the like, depend not on our Opinions, he only did what he could, forbearing to determine whether they are *Evils*; which made him bear them with the greater Moderation. Whereby he merited the Praiſe of much Conſtancy in Danger. He was very far from being what ſome would repreſent him, as not avoiding it, not turning out of the Way when he met a Cart, or was on a Precipice, not ſhunning Dogs that would attack him, flying from the Company of Men, ſauntring in Solitude, or remaining like a Statue, immoveable, in the ſame Poſture.

All this was contrived to render him ridiculous, by People of little Sincerity

ty, and not rightly informed of his Doctrine. He was on the contrary very much eſteemed by his Fellow-Citizens, who offered him the ſupreme Pontificate of his Country, and conferred great Honours upon him, granting to all *Philoſophers* an Exemption from publick Offices for his ſake. The *Athenians* gave him the Freedom of their City. It is ſaid likewiſe that he received a Preſent of ſix thouſand Crowns of Gold from *Alexander*, when he firſt approached him, whether it was to ſalute, or to offer him a Poem, he made in his Honour.

*Epicurus* very much admired him, and often informed himſelf of his Manners and Conduct. But, you'll ſay, *Epicurus* repreſented him as an Ignorant. But which of the *Philoſophers* has eſcaped his ſlanders? He does not reſpect even *Democritus*, the Fountain from whence he drew his Philoſophy, nor *Nauſiphanes* of *Teos*, who had been his Maſter, and a Diſciple of *Pyrrho*. It did not become him to reproach *Pyrrho* with Ignorance, who was ignorant himſelf, having not the leaſt Tincture of polite Learning. It was likewiſe his Cuſtom to inſult thoſe who applied themſelves to it, under Pretence that the

Knowledge thereof contributed Nothing to Wiſdom, but in the Bottom did it to hide his own Ignorance under this counterfeit Contempt.

But *Pyrrho* was accounted ignorant, not for being ſo in Reality, as *Cicero* (*a*) teſtifies, and muſt be allow'd, but becauſe according to his Syſtem of *Philoſophy*, he made Profeſſion of knowing Nothing, and that he could know Nothing; notwithſtanding which Men of great Learning came out of his School. Other Perſons likewiſe treated him with great Indignity, not ſo much through Averſion for the Doctor, as the Doctrine.

But on the other Hand, he was in the higheſt Eſteem with the People. His Diſciples very numerous, extolled him, and eſpecially *Timon* of *Phlius*, wonderfully applauded his Wit, Subtilty, and Penetration in Diſputes, his Conſtancy in the Accidents of Life, and his Modeſty. He called him a *Sun*, and believed no Man was to be compared to him. 'Tis he who according to *Pocock*'s Conjecture is by the *Arabs* called *Phurun*, and in their Ignorance of *Greek* Hiſtory, is believed by them to have been the Diſciple of *Thales* and *Pythagoras*;

(*a*) Cicero libr. 3. de Finib.

as

as if the Doctrine of *Pyrrho* included all the *Philoſophy* of the *Greeks*, divided into two Sects, the *Ionick* and *Italick*.

The Followers of *Pyrrho*, were called after his Name *Pyrrhonians*, and alſo *Scepticks*, for conſidering and examining the Weight of Reaſons, which preſented themſelves, *pro* and *con* upon all Queſtions. Were named *Zeteticks*, for that they applied themſelves to the Search of *Truth*. And ſome ſtil'd them *Aporeticks*, becauſe it was their Profeſſion to doubt of all Things.

*Arceſilas* on their Precepts undertook to reform the ancien *Academy*, and erect the new. For it is ſaid he imitated *Pyrrho*, and converſed with *Timon*. So that having enriched the *Epoche*, that is to ſay *Pyrrho*'s Art of doubting, with the elegant Learning of *Plato*, and armed himſelf with the *Logick* of *Diodorus*, *Ariſto* pleaſantly applied to him that Verſe of *Homer* on the *Chimæra*, which ſays that ſhe was Lion before, Dragon behind, and *Chimæra*, i.e. Goat in the middle. According to him, *Arceſilas* was *Plato* before, *Pyrrho* behind, and *Diodorus* in the midſt. Wherefore ſome ranked him in the Number of *Scepticks*, and *Sex-*

*tus Empiricus* avers, there is very little Difference between his Sect, which is *Sceptick*, and that of *Arceſilas*, the middle *Academy*.

*How many* Academies *there have really been, and the Difference between the* Academy, *and* Pyrrhoniſm.

30. Although it may be enough for my Deſign to have ſhewn already, (as I ſhall continue to do farther) that the moſt illuſtrious *Philoſophers* of Antiquity have acknowledged the Weakneſs of human Underſtanding, I ſhall not think it Loſs of Time, to make appear in what the new *Academy* was different from the old; and wherein one and the other differed from *Pyrrhoniſm*. Some have pretended there was but one *Academy* and no more. *Philo*, Author of the fourth *Academy*, wrote a Book to prove it. *Plutarch* another to the ſame Purpoſe.

This will be found true, if without hearkning to Conteſts, we have Regard only to the firſt *Principle* laid down by *Socrates, that Man knows nothing*. For as the ſeveral Branches, which grow out of the ſame Trunk, and extend themſelves differently, are not different Trees; ſo all thoſe Sects, ſprung out of that one Trunk of the Doctrine of *Socrates*, although divided into divers Schools, ſeem to make but one *Academy*. Notwithſtanding this, if we look more near-

ly into the Matter, there will appear ſuch a Difference betwixt the old and the new, that we muſt of Neceſſity acknowledge there have been two *Academies*. For when *Socrates* ſaid, that he knew but one Thing, namely that he knew Nothing, he acknowledged he knew ſome Thing, and therefore believed that Man might know ſome Thing with Certainty.

*Arceſilas* on the contrary denied that Certainty: And therein a capital and invincible Difference conſiſts; the one believing with *Socrates*, that Man may know ſome Thing; the other maintaining with *Arceſilas*, that Man can know Nothing. As to the Corrective *Carneades* and *Philo* brought to the Doctrine of *Arceſilas*, 'tis very inconſiderable, and ought to be looked upon almoſt as inſignificant. For it is eaſy to reconcile what *Arceſilas* ſaid, that there is no *Truth* to be found in *Rerum Natura*, with what *Carneades* ſaid, *viz.* that he did not deny but there is ſome *Truth* in Things, but that we have no *Rule* to diſcern it. For there are two Kinds of *Truth*, according to the School Diſtinction, one called *Truth of Exiſtence*, the other *Truth of Judgment*. Now it is clear that theſe

two Propoſitions of *Arceſilas*, and *Carneades*, have Reſpect to *Truth* of Judgment: For how could thoſe who maintain that we cannot know, nor affirm any Thing, know and affirm the *Truth* of *Exiſtence*, that is to ſay that Things exiſt? But the *Truth of Judgment* is of the Number of relative Things, which ought not to be conſidered alone, and in themſelves, but as having Reference to other, for that *Truth* refers to our Underſtanding. When *Arceſilas* then ſaid, there is no *Truth*, his Meaning was that there is Nothing in Things, which the Underſtanding of Man can know with Certainty. And that is the ſame that *Carneades* held.

Beſides *Arceſilas* alledged that Nothing can be comprehended, that all Things are obſcure: (for the Word *obſcure* better expreſſes the *Greek* Term ἄδηλα, which *Arceſilas* made Uſe of, than that of *uncertain*, employed by *Cicero*.) *Carneades* agreed that Nothing can be comprehended, but did not allow for the ſame Reaſon that all Things are obſcure; becauſe Probabilities to which he would have a wiſe Man adhere, he affirmed are not obſcure in Effect. But notwithſtanding this, *Arceſilas*

*ceſilas* maintained that Things are obſcure in ſuch Sort, that they cannot be comprehended, but do not ceaſe therefore, to be either probable or improbable. This was the very Sentiment of *Carneades:* for he denied not but Things are ſo obſcure that they cannot be comprehended, he only denied their being ſo, as to hinder us from diſcerning thoſe which deſerve to be preferred or rejected, in the Uſe of Life.

It follows, that there was not any Diſagreement betwixt them, *viz.* in that *Carneades* permitted the wiſe Man to have Opinions, and perhaps too ſometimes to give his Aſſent; whereas *Arceſilas* denied both one and the other. Their Sentiments were the ſame. *Carneades* pretended only, that the wiſe Man ought to make Uſe of Things probable in the common Occurrences of Life, and without which we cannot live; but not in the Conduct of the Underſtanding, and the Search of *Truth*, from which only *Arceſilas* baniſhed Opinion and Aſſent. All their Differences then conſiſted in Expreſſions, and not in Things.

Neither was there any greater Difference between the Doctrine of *Pyrrho* and the former. For when he ſaid it

was the Weakneſs of our Capacity, and not the Nature of Things, which kept us from comprehending them; it was in that very Point likewiſe that *Arceſilas* and *Carneades* ſeemed not to accord; *Arceſilas* aſſerting there is no *Truth* in Things, *Carneades* owning there is indeed ſome *Truth* in them, but pretending we cannot comprehend it. Now this being different in Terms, is not therefore ſo in Effect. For to ſay there is no *Truth* in Things, and that the *Truth* of them in its own Nature cannot be comprehended, are relative Propoſitions, which refer to human Underſtanding, and their Signification is, that it is not the Nature of Things, but the Obſcurity and Weakneſs of human Underſtanding which hinders it from being able to comprehend them.

*Philo* alſo agreed with *Carneades* that the wiſe Man may have ſome Opinions. But when he ſaid that the wiſe Man may alſo comprehend ſomewhat, but not ſo as to have no Reaſon for Doubt in it; here ſeems to be a little Fallacy in the Word *to comprehend*. For if in that Comprehenſion, he find any Reaſon to doubt, it is not Comprehenſion, but Opinion. So he re-

lapſed

apsed into the Sentiment of *Carneades*, and agreed that Probability is to be followed in the Emergencies of Life, and the Conduct of Manners. But as to the fifth *Academy*, that of *Antiochus*, it was purely *Dogmatical:* Nothing but the old *Academy* covered with the Rags of the *Stoicks*, and therefore to have no Place in this Dissertation.

31. It must be granted then, that there have been properly but two *Academies*, the old, that of *Socrates*, and *Antiochus*; and the new, that of *Arcesilas*, *Carneades* and *Philo:* and this new *Academy* was no other but the Philosophy of *Pyrrho*. For if some Heads may be proposed in which they seem to differ, that is not so considerable, as to make two Sects of them, since the new and the old *Academy*, differing in Points much more essential, have nevertheless retained the Name of *Academy*. As we see likewise that the Doctrine of *Aristotle*, which was so dispersed, that it formed an Infinity of Sects, so different in their Doctrines, as to treat each other as mad, yet all retained the Name of *Peripateticks*, and *Aristotelians*.

*There have been but two Academies, the old, and the new, and the latter was true* Pyrrhonism.

'Tis

'Tis an old Queſtion, as we learn from *Aulus Gellius* (*a*), and very much controverted by many *Greek* Authors, *viz.* to know in what the *Academicks* and *Pyrrhonians* differ. *Plutarch* compoſed a Book on this Matter. But ſince Time has deprived us of thoſe Lights of Antiquity, let us follow *Sextus Empiricus* in his Account of all the Points in which this Difference lies, ſo exact that Nothing can be added to it.

*The Difference between the new Academy, and the Sect of the Scepticks, propoſed, and reconciled. The firſt Difference.*

32. He places the firſt Article of the Diſagreement of the new *Academy*, and the *Sceptical* Doctrine in this, that both one and the other aſſerting human Underſtanding can comprehend Nothing, the *Academicks* ſaid it in the Affirmative, and the *Scepticks* doubtfully. But this Difference is of no Weight, and *Sextus* propoſed it with Uncertainty. Indeed he who believes we know Nothing, and that we are ignorant even of this, how can he affirm any Thing? For whoever affirms a Thing, intimates that he knows what he affirms?

*Second Difference.*

33. The ſecond Point of Difference propoſed by *Sextus*, ſeems to be more important, although light in it ſelf; it conſiſts only in the Uſe of a Term. They agreed both one and the other

(*a*) *A. Gell.* lib. ii. CAP. 5.

there

ere are Things good and bad. But
e *Academicks* ſpeaking thus, declare
the ſame Time, they are perſwaded
is more probable that what is found
be good is ſo, than that it is not.
nd when the *Scepticks* ſay ſome
hings are good, they do not mean
ey are perſwaded what they ſay is
ore probable than its contrary; only
eclare they follow the common Uſages
Life, but without Perſwaſion and
pinion.

All the Difference then conſiſts in this
pinion, which the *Academicks* confeſs,
nd the *Scepticks* diſown. But when
e *Scepticks* in the Uſage of Life chuſe
Thing as good, and prefer it to ano-
er, they are led thereto by an Ap-
earance of Good which is found in
at, and not in the other. They have
en in their Mind, a ſtrong and ſenſi-
e *Idea* imprinted by that *Image*, and
ppearance of Good, or its contrary,
und in theſe Things: and it is by this
*dea* they are conducted to the Choice
f that from whence the *Idea* was de-
ved. The *Academicks* are likewiſe
d by a like *Idea*, to that which ap-
ears good to them.

All the Difference conſiſts in this;
at one and the other being influenced
by

by the *Idea* imprinted in their Minds by an Appearance of Good, the *Academicks* follow, and the *Scepticks* are led to it; and likewiſe in this; that the *Academicks* call it Opinion or Perſwaſion, and the *Scepticks* not: although neither affirm that the Thing from whence this *Image* or Appearance of Good iſſues, is good; but both own that the Thing choſen, *ſeems* to them to be good, and that this *Idea* is imprinted in their Minds, by which they ſuffer themſelves to be drawn. The *Scepticks* alſo deny not but they have ſome Perſwaſion, nevertheleſs put a Difference betwixt their Kind of Perſwaſion, and that of the *Academicks*, as I ſhall ſhew.

*Third Difference.* 34. Their third Diſcord is reducible to the ſame Thing. The *Academicks* maintain there is Likelihood in many of their *Ideas*, that other of them have none; and amongſt thoſe that have it there is in ſome more, in ſome leſs. The *Scepticks* pretend they are equal in Reſpect to the Credit we give them. But *Sextus* who propoſes this Difference, finds an Expedient to remove it. For he ſays the *Scepticks* will have the Verdict of *Ideas* to be equal as to Reaſon, *i. e.* ſo far as it reſpects the Knowledg

ledge of *Truth*, and the Acquiſition of *Science* by Reaſon. For the moſt clear *Idea* is of no more Validity to make me diſcern *Truth*, than the moſt obſcure: but in Regard to the Uſage of Life, they will have the clear *Idea* to be preferred. And upon this *Arceſilas* neither ſpoke nor thought otherwiſe than the *Scepticks*.

35. The fourth Difference conſiſts not in the Thing, but in the Manner of it: for both allow they are drawn by ſome *Objects*, but the *Academicks* ſay this Attraction operates by exciting a vehement Propenſity, which the *Scepticks* deny; as if one of the Parties was carried toward Probabilities, and the other only ſuffered themſelves to be led; though both refuſe their Belief, or Aſſent to either. *Fourth Difference.*

36. *Sextus Empiricus* inſtances moreover another Difference between them, upon Things which concern the End, ſaying the *Academicks* follow Probabilities in the Uſage of Life; and the *Scepticks* yield Obedience to Laws, Cuſtoms, and natural Affections. In which, tho' in many other Matters, their Language is different, their Sentiments alike. For the *Scepticks* obey Laws, Cuſtoms, and natural Affections, becauſe *Fifth Difference.*

cauſe it appears to them to be good to follow the *Idea* imprinted in their Minds, by that *Image* or Appearance of Good, found in Affections, Cuſtoms and Laws. Now to follow the mental *Idea*, is what the *Academicks* call to approve, or have an Opinion of: and this Appearance of Good, from whence that *Idea* is derived, they call probable.

Thus when the *Academick* obeyed Laws, he ſaid he acted in that Manner becauſe in his Opinion it was good, and probably beſt to do ſo: and when the *Sceptick* did the ſame, he uſed not the Terms of Opinion and Probability, fearing leſt that ſhould lead him to own he yielded his Belief like the other. The End of the *Scepticks*, and of *Arceſilas* being alike for the *Epoche*, *i. e.* Suſpenſion of Belief and its Attendant *Ataraxia*, *i. e.* Imperturbability, it was neceſſary that this ſhould be approved by both and ſo it was in Effect: for as well he as they agreed, particular *Epoches* to be Goods; and particular Aſſents or Conſents Evils; and that it was neceſſary both ſhould fly the one, and follow the other. Now to purſue a Thing, as a Good, whether you call it to approve or to have an Opinion of, or whatever Name you are pleaſed to give it, the

(a) This

Things remains the ſame ſtill without any Difference.

37. *Sextus* alſo reports another Diſagreement betwixt *Arceſilas* and the *Scepticks*; in that both declaring the *Epoche*, or Retention of Belief to be good, and Belief or Aſſent evil: The *Scepticks* affirmed Nothing of this, but ſaid that ſuch a Thing appeared ſo to them; Whereas *Arceſilas* believed that it was in Reality, and in its own Nature, what he pronounced it. *Sextus* does not attribute this Sentiment to him but by Surmiſe and Conjecture, and *Aulus Gellus* (*a*) expreſsly aſſerts the contrary: for he writes that the *Academicks* and *Scepticks* maintained *Ideas* to be formed from external *Objects*, not according to the Nature of thoſe *Objects*, but the Diſpoſition of Bodies and Minds in whom they are formed. *Sixth Difference.*

Moreover, the Good of the End is relative, as we have ſaid in ſpeaking of the *Truth* of Things: The Good of the End relates to us, and there is no other Reaſon for calling a Thing good, but becauſe it ſeems to be ſo to us. From whence it follows that *Arceſilas* could not eſtimate the Good of

(*a*) *A. Gell.* lib. ii. Cap. 5.

the

the End, otherwiſe than the *Scepticks* did. In ſhort can we believe that *Arceſilas* thought Things carry any Good in their own Nature, he who was not perſwaded they have any *Truth* in them?

As to what *Sextus* adds, that ſome have believed *Arceſilas* handled Matters according to the *Pyrrhonian* Method, when he treated his young Diſciples before they had taken the Taint of his Doctrine, ſo as to diſcover the Strength of their Parts, and finding them ingenious and ſubtil, inſtructed them in the Doctrine of *Plato* affirmatively, and after the Manner of the *Dogmatiſts*. *Sextus* himſelf owns that he reports this of *Arceſilas* on uncertain Hear-ſays. But after all, if it ſhould be true, we ought not to judge of the Merit of a Doctrine, by the Inconſtancy and Levity of the Doctor.

*Seventh Diffenence.*

38. The laſt Diſagreement of the *Academicks* and the *Scepticks*, is propoſed to us by *Aulus Gellius* (*a*) a Grammarian much more than a Philoſopher. It conſiſts in this, that both granting Man cannot comprehend, nor determine any Thing, the *Academicks* allow the

(*a*) *A. Gell.* lib. ii. Cap. 5.

hav

have *ſome Comprehenſion as it were* of that, and make ſome ſuch *Deciſion*; Whereas the *Pyrrhonians* ſay even that does not appear in the leaſt to be true, becauſe to them Nothing is ſo.

In the firſt Place, I know what it is to comprehend and determine; but am ignorant what it is *to comprehend* and *determine as it were*. For if *to comprehend as it were* be to comprehend, what Need of obſcuring the Signification of a Word ſo clear in it ſelf, by that Addition? Beſides, who will ſay the *Academicks* comprehend any Thing, making it their Profeſſion to know Nothing, and not to know whether they do ſo or not? How could *Arceſilas* think of being able to comprehend any Thing, who would not allow even of our having Opinions?

But if *to comprehend as it were* be not to comprehend at all, there remains no farther Difference between the *Academicks* and the *Pyrrhonians*, ſince they all ſay they comprehend Nothing. But if to *comprehend* a Thing *as it were*, is to ſeem to the Mind that a Thing is ſo, as when any one ſays he *comprehends as it were* that a Thing is true, he means it ſeems to him to be true; and therefore *Aulus Gellius* pre-

tends it ſeems to the *Academicks* that they comprehend Nothing, and that it does not ſeem to the *Pyrrhonians* that they comprehend Nothing: This is the third Difference we have before inſtanced after *Sextus Empiricus*, and of which we have ſhewed the Nullity.

But if *to comprehend as it were* be as *Carneades* would have it to comprehend, but not without ſome Grounds for doubting, which he allowed to human Underſtanding, this is to abuſe the Word *comprehend*; for ſuch Comprehenſion is true Opinion. Since the Differences of the *Scepticks* and the *Academicks* are null then, or very ſmall, it is not without Reaſon, that *Sextus* very knowing in the Matter, and who collected them, finds ſo great an Agreement between the Doctrine of *Pyrrho* and *Arceſilas*, that they may paſs for one and the ſame Sect. *Seneca* (*a*) has writ likewiſe that they both turn on one and the ſame *Principle*, viz. *of knowing Nothing:* And laſtly *Aulus Gellius* (*b*) teaches us that the Diſciples of *Pyrrho* and *Arceſilas* went by the ſame Name of *Scepticks*, *Epheticks*, and *Aporeticks*; and therefore as has been already obſerved, *Arceſilas* was placed in the Number of *Scepticks*.

(*a*) Senec. Epiſt. 89. (*b*) A. Gell. Libr. ii. Cap. 5.

39. A

39. As to my ſelf, ſo well knowing the Sect of the *Academicks*, and of the *Pyrrhonians* to have been the ſame, I am often ſurprized in thinking, why theſe *Philoſophers* ſhould be more willing to be called *Academicks* than *Pyrrhonians*, as if the Name of the one would be diſgraceful, and that of the other honourable. Two Reaſons of this Preference, appeared to me probable; one, in that very few *Philoſophers* of any Reputation, proceeded out of the School of *Pyrrho*; whereas the *Academy* could boaſt of many excellent Men, to whom it was glorious to ſee itſelf aſſociated; the other, that *Pyrrho* and the *Pyrrhonians* have been ridiculed, as if they had reduced the Life of Men to a State of abſolute Inactivity: And therefore they who ſhall ſtile themſelves *Pyrrhonians*, will neceſſarily incur the Fate of being laughed at.

*Why the Philoſophers, who make Profeſſion of doubting, had rather paſs for* Academicks *than* Pyrrhonians.

40. But let us return to the Liſt of thoſe who ſignalized themſelves likewiſe in the Art of *Doubt*. *Diogenes Laertius*, on the Authority of *Hippobotus* and *Sotion*, has given us a Series of this Liſt down to *Saturninus Cythenas*, a Diſciple of *Sextus Empiricus*, whoſe Works we have. He informs us *Menodotus* was deceived, when he writ that *Timon*

*It is falſe that the Sect of the* Scepticks, *or* Pyrrhonians *was interrupted after* Timon.

Diſciple of *Pyrrho* had no Succeſſor, and then the Sect was intirely extinct, 'till the Time of *Ptolemæus* of *Cyre* who re-eſtabliſhed it; and that afterwards it maintained itſelf by a continued-Succeſſion even to *Sextus*. For this *Ptolemæus* was a Diſciple of *Eubulus*, *Eubulus* of *Euphranor*, *Euphranor* of *Timon*, under whom he had a great many Fellow Students.

All theſe *Philoſophers* notwithſtanding being of ſmall Account, we are not to wonder, if *Cicero* ſo often tells us the Sect of *Pyrrho* was rejected and brought to Nothing long before his Time, and if *Seneca* (*a*) in his *Natural Queſtions* complains of it. 'Tis for the ſame Reaſon that *Ariſtocles* has writ, as *Euſebius* reports (*b*), i. e. that the *Pyrrhonians* abandoned and confounded, remained mute, as if they had never been, 'till the Time of *Æneſidemus* who revived their Sect at *Alexandria*.

Timon *of* Phlius.

41. That we may not loſe Time, we will ſpeak only of the moſt celebrated, and principally of *Timon* of *Phlius*, who turned the Confidence of the *Dogmaſticks* to Ridicule, by burleſque Verſes, called *Silles*. He taught that whoever aſpires to be happy, muſt hold all Things

(*a*) Senec. Nat. Quæſt. libr. vii. Cap. 32. (*b*) Euſeb. Præp. Evang. libr. xiv. Cap. 18.

for

for uncertain and indifferent; that our Senſes and Opinions do not ſhew us what is true or falſe; and therefore we are not to bend our Minds, either to one or other; muſt affirm Nothing, but whatever we ſpeak of, are no more to ſay it is, than it is not: And that he who reſts in this Diſpoſition, ſhall not be expoſed to any Trouble, or Inquietude of Mind.

Nauſiphanes *of* Teos.

42. *Nauſiphanes* of *Teos* is likewiſe numbred among the Diſciples of *Pyrrho*. *Seneca* (*a*) teſtifies he ſaid with *Timon*, that among all Things which appear to us, we are no more to think they are, than that they are not. *Seneca* adds he aſſerted moreover, that this only is certain, that Nothing is certain. In which I will not believe *Seneca*, although he ſhould give me his Oath: For to talk ſo, *Nauſiphanes* muſt have returned to the old *Academy*, and forſaken the School of *Pyrrho*, who very conſtantly taught, that Nothing is certain. *Timon* and *Nauſiphanes* were Followers of *Pyrrho*, and *Epicurus* of *Nauſiphanes*.

Theodoſus *of* Bithynia.

43. *Theodoſus* of *Bithynia*, or *Tripoli*, adhered to the ſame Party. He was a refined Wit, and ſupported this Sect by excellent Works.

(*a*) Seneca Epiſt. 89.

Æneſidemus *of* Cnoſſus.

44. The ſame School produced *Æneſidemus* of *Cnoſſus* too. At *Alexandria* in *Egypt* he relieved this Sect which then began to fail.

Ptolemy *of* Alexandria.

45. Some have joined *Ptolemy* the *Aſtronomer* to this Liſt, who ſaid Acceſs to Sciences was denied human Underſtanding, either by Reaſon of its own Weakneſs, or the Obſcurity of Things.

Cornelius Celſus. Phavorinus.

46, 47. *Cornelius Celſus* did the ſame at *Rome*, as *Æneſidemus* at *Alexandria*. *Phavorinus* did no leſs; for having declared himſelf a *Sceptick*, he very exquiſitely explain'd the *ten Modes* of the *Pyrrhonians*, and maintained there is no Faculty in us, to comprehend any Thing.

Sextus Empiricus.

48. But Time having conſumed all thoſe Works, *Sextus Empiricus* repaired that Loſs by Writings of his own, and by his excellent *Hypotypoſes*, wherein the Form and Conſtitution of his *Philoſophy* is exactly laid open; and in his *Diſſertations* againſt the *Dogmatiſts*, which place in a clear Light the Vanity, and Uncertainty of thoſe *Sciences* which are eſteemed moſt certain.

*Whether* Sextus Empiricus *is the ſame as* Sextus *of* Chæronæa.

49. Many have thought that *Sextus Empiricus* and *Sextus* of *Chæronæa*, Son of *Plutarch*'s Daughter, one of the Pre-

ceptor

ceptors of the Emperor *Marcus Aurelius* were the same. They lived in the same Time, bore the same Name, were *Philosophers*, and both had a Preceptor named *Herodotus*. *Suidas*, a frivolous Author, does no Injury to this Opinion, when he says that one of them was of *Chæronæa*, and the other of *Libya*. He might be said to be of *Libya*, by reason of the long Residence he made at *Cyrene*, a Town of *Libya*; as the illustrious *Pomponius* was sirnamed *Atticus*, although a *Roman*, for remaining long at *Athens*.

The Objection that some raise from *Herodotus* being their Preceptor is not conclusive; for it is said that *Herodotus*, Preceptor of *Sextus* of *Chæronæa*, was of *Philadelphia*, and therefore different from *Herodotus* Preceptor of the *Libyan Sextus*, who was of *Tarsus*. *Philadelphia* and *Tarsus* were two Cities of *Cilicia*, not very distant, and from their Neighbourhood might easily be mistaken.

'Tis objected moreover, that *Sextus* of *Chæronæa* was a *Stoick*, and *Sextus* of *Libya* a *Pyrrhonian*: For *Capitolinus* says, that *Marcus Aurelius* was a Disciple of *Sextus* of *Chæronæa*, Nephew of *Plutarch*, of *Junius Rusticus*, of *Claudius Maximus*, and *Cinna Catulus*, all *Stoicks*. But this Objection is null, for

the Terms of this Paſſage in the Manner it is conceived, may very well ſignify that the three laſt were *Stoicks*, as they really were, but not *Sextus*; for *Suidas* informs us, that both the *Sextus's* were *Pyrrhonians*.

They inſiſt moreover that *Sextus* the *Pyrrhonian*, was ſirnamed *Empiricus*, and not *Sextus* of *Chæroneæa*. But who knows not that Sirnames are often omitted, as in theſe Paſſages of *Suidas*, and in the *Iſagoge*, attributed to *Galen*, where no Sirname is annexed to the Name of *Sextus? Caſaubon (a)* adds to this that the Emperor *Marcus Aurelius* has writ, that he learned of *Sextus* the Method to find, comprehend, and place in Order Inſtructions neceſſary to Life; which cannot agree to *Sextus Empiricus*, who taught that we can comprehend Nothing, and rejected all Kinds of Tenets whatever.

But there is ſome Appearance that thoſe mentioned Inſtructions were certain uſeful Rules for the Conduct of Life; but not Principles tending to the Search of *Truth*. For ſuch is the Doctrine of the *Scepticks*, that we muſt ſuſpend our Aſſent and Belief, when we ſeek *Truth*;

(a) Caſaubon in Capitol. Vit. Marc. Imper.

but

but in the Conduct of Life, follow Appearances. On which Account I believe the Emperor ſpoke ſo of *Sextus*, with Deſign to ſhew, that although he was a *Sceptick* in his Doctrine, he was *Dogmatical* as to Manners.

The Proof *Salmaſius* brings to ſhew theſe two *Sextus's* to be different, is no better than the former. He grounds it on *Sextus* of *Chæronæa* being contemporary with *Galen*, and that *Sextus Empiricus* was more ancient than he, being placed by him in his *Iſagoge* in the Number of *Empiricks*. As if becauſe quoted by *Galen*, he muſt have been before the Age of *Galen*, and that we ſeldom quote our Contemporaries. But dropping this Exception, it is enough to ſay, that this *Iſagoge* ſeems to be the Work of another Author and not of *Galen*. In the mean Time I will aſſure Nothing herein, nor deviate ſo ſoon from the Law I eſtabliſh to my ſelf to doubt of all Things; leaving every one the Libery ty of his own Judgment.

50. As to what remains, this *Sextus* of whom we ſpeak joined the Profeſſion of the *Sceptick Philoſophy*, to that Sect of *Phyſicians*, who apply themſelves to Experience, and are therefore called *Empiricks*, of which *Acron* of *Agrigentum*

*Great Affinity between the Sceptical, the Empirical, and the Methodick Sect.*

*gentum* and *Philinus* of *Coos* were the Authors. *Menodotus* of *Nicomedia*, *Saturninus Cythenas*, and that *Marcellus*, who to hide his Adherence to the *Sceptical* Doctrine, would be called *Empirick*; theſe three likewiſe joined, as *Sextus* did, the *Sceptical* Doctrine to the *Empirical* Practice of Phyſick.

The ſame *Sextus* *(a)* nevertheleſs maintains that the Sect of Medicine call'd *Methodick*, whereof *Themiſon* was Inventer, comes nearer to the *Sceptical* Doctrine, than the *Empirical* Sect, in Caſe the latter affirms Things uncertain cannot be comprehended: For the *Sceptick Doctrine* forbids the affirming any Thing. From hence it follows, that this Affirmation excepted, we ſhall find great Affinity between the *Sceptick* and the *Empirick*, as *Sextus* did between the *Sceptick* and the *Methodick*. And the more becauſe we read in *Celſus* *(b)* that the *Empirick* taught as well as the *Sceptick*, that Nature is unſearchable, and nothing can be comprehended, (which is ſhewn by their Conteſts who have treated of theſe Matters) and likewiſe that the Practice of Medicine wholly depends on Uſe and

(*a*) Sext. Empir. Hypot. Libr. 1. CAP. 4. (*b*) Cornel. Celſ. de Re Medic. Præm. Libr. i.

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Experience, and Reaſoning has no Hand in it.

The ſame *Sextus* maintained in other Places, that the *Pyrrhonians* were not Ignorants, as was believed, but ſurpaſſed the reſt of *Philoſophers*, in the Uſe and Experience of Things, *i.e.* were Maſters of the *Empirical* Doctrine in the ſtricteſt Signification of that Word, and that the *Empiricks* rejected all kinds of Reaſoning, which is purely *Sceptical*, provided we intermix not any Manner of Affirmation.

Lucian.

51. *Lucian* of *Samoſata* was Contemporary with the now-mentioned. *Photius* (*a*) places him in the Number of thoſe, whoſe Opinion was that we are to adhere to no Opinion.

Uranius.

52. *Uranius* openly profeſſed himſelf a *Sceptick*. He lived in the Time of *Juſtinian*; and *Choſröes* King of *Perſia*, a Lover of *Philoſophy*, diſtinguiſhed him with great Honours, favoured him with Preſents, and Letters full of Expreſſions of Eſteem, and was willing to be inſtructed by him. It is then Matter of Aſtoniſhment, that a King not unwiſe, nor illiterate, ſhould have ſo great a Value for a Man ſo ignorant and incapable, as *Agathias* repreſents him (*b*). If what he ſays of him be

(*a*) Phot. Tmem. 118. (*b*) Agath. libr. ii.

true,

true, the *Sceptick* Sect which he followed, muſt in it ſelf be grateful to thoſe *Barbarians*, even in a Man, who was but little inſtructed in it, and beſides branded with Vice and Infamy. There were many other *Philoſophers* alſo, who adhered to this Sect, the Diſcovery of which I leave to the ſtudious and inquiſitive.

*And moreover of the Number of the* Dogmatiſts Porphyry.

53. Having run through the Sects of *Philoſophers*, who are for our doubting all, and affirming Nothing, we return to the *Dogmatiſts*. As to the *Stoicks*, who though proſtituting their Belief even to fabulous Stories, allowed not their Proſelytes to be guilty of Precipitation of Judgment, and giving it a Name agreeable to that Caution, viz. *Aproptoſie*, carefully recommended it to them; we ſhall hereafter meet with a very plain Confeſſion of their Ignorance, and chiefly that of *Porphyry*, who would have been beyond Diſpute a very great Man, laying aſide his extreme Averſion to Chriſtianity. He openly acknowledged in his Book of the Soul addreſſed to *Böethus*, that Nothing is certain, but all dubious in *Philoſophy*.

Ariſtippus.

54. *Ariſtippus*, Author of the *Cyrenaick* Sect, of more Antiquity than *Porphyrius*, and after him *Ariſto* of *Chios* taught

aught that the Works of Nature are to us incomprehenſible, that we have no Buſineſs with *Logick*, but only with *Morality*, and that Part of it which treats of Virtues and Vices; would have us prefer Virtue to Vice, and look upon the reſt as indifferent, not excepting Health it ſelf, which as he thought ought not to be preferred before Sickneſs. In Things of this Nature he denies the Liberty of Choice and Preference.

Herillius *of* Carthage.

55. *Herillus* of *Carthage* in like manner looked upon all Things as indifferent, and forbid the preferring one before another; except that *Science* only, in which he will have the ſupreme Good to conſiſt.

Menedemus *of* Eretria.

56. *Menedemus* of *Eretria*, Diſciple of *Plato*, adhered to no Opinion.

*The* Eretrick *and* Megarick Philoſophers.

57. 'Tis from him, and *Phedo* who preceeded him, that the *Eliack*, or *Eretrick* Sect was derived. It is of them, and the *Megaricks*, who followed the Doctrine of *Euclid* of *Megara*, and were named *Eriſticks*, or *Dialecticks*: 'Tis of them, I ſay, that *Seneca* (*a*) has writ in theſe Terms: *It is almoſt the ſame ſubject, that takes up the* Pyrrhonians, Megaricks, Eretricks, *and* Academicks,

(*a*) Senec. Epiſt. 89.

*who*

*who are Authors of a new Science, which consists in knowing Nothing.* And *Cicero* (*a*) in the Number of the Professors of this *Science*, inserts *Stilpo*, *Diodorus*, and *Alexinus*.

Monimus the Cynick.

*Monimus* the *Cynick*, said with *Anaxarchus* that all Things depend on Opinions, are like certain Pictures, and differ not from the Visions of Madmen or those who sleep; and that there is no *Rule* of *Truth*.

*Among remote Nations, the* Magi.

59. If we pass to remote Nations, we shall find many of the same Sentiments of suspending Judgment and Belief. *Diogenes* (*b*) *Laertius* relates that *Anaxarchus* and *Pyrrho*, learnt of the *Magi* and *Gymnosophists* of the *Indies*, that excellent Method of *Philosophizing*, which forbids us to think we can comprehend or that we should yield Assent and Belief to any Thing.

*The* Brachmans.

60. The *Brachmans*, according to the Testimony of *Strabo* (*c*) and *Megasthenes*, assert Nothing is good nor evil because that which appears good to one seems bad to another. What has been said makes it visible, that the *Sceptic Philosophy* penetrated even to the Extremities of the *East*.

(*a*) Cicer. Libr. iv. Acad. (*b*) Diogen. Laert. in Pyrrhon. (*c*) Strabo Libr. xv.

61. Amon

61. Among the *Turks* is a Sect of Philoſophers, called *Hairetis*, i. e. the *Aſtoniſhed*. Their Profeſſion is to doubt of all; they never affirm any Thing, believing we cannot diſcern *Truth* from Falſhood; according to them every Thing is probable, nothing certain; they obey Laws; but are over *Sceptical*, in that they make their Method of doubting extend even into the common Uſages of Life. *Certain* Turk Philoſphers, *named the Aſtoniſhed*

62. Some *Jews* likewiſe retained this Art of doubting. *Philo* reports the *Eſſens* held for a Maxim, that *Logick* is not neceſſary to acquire Virtue; the Knowledge of Nature being above human Capacity; and that therefore we ſhould apply ourſelves to *Theology*, which has reſpect to *God*, and the Creation of the World: This comes very near the Doctrine of *Ariſto* of *Chio*. *Among the* Jews *the* Eſſens.

63. The *Seboreans*, *Philoſophers* of the ſame *Jewiſh* Nation, that is to ſay, *Opiniators*, took the Method of the *Sceptick*s, in treating of Matters *Theological*. Thus they examined the Doctrine of the *Talmud*, diſputing *pro* and *con*, without any affirming. *And the* Seboreans

64. *Rabby Moſes*, Son of *Maimonides* who leaving the Impertinence of the *Rabbins*, adhered to a Doctrine much *R.* Moſes, *Son of* Maimonides.

more ſolid, ſaid (*a*) all the Men in the World cannot attain the Knowledge of *Truth*, ſo narrow is human Capacity, and that therefore we ſhould ſuppreſs all Thoughts which may turn us from the Service of *God*, and the Practice of his Law; that if Men follow their own Thoughts, the true Worſhip will be deſtroyed, and that ſuch was the Meaning of *Moſes* to the *Jews* in this Text; (*b*) *Apply yourſelves not to ſeek after your own Heart and your own Eyes, after which you have been accuſtomed to ſeek*, i. e. lean not too much on your own Underſtanding which is weak and ſhort, and think not to acquire the Knowledge of *Truth*.

*And the Diſcourſers, among the* Arabs.

65. The *Arabs* likewiſe had their *Scepticks*, by the *Jews* called *Medabberim*, i. e. *Diſcourſers*, or rather *Logicians*, of whom *Averröes*, and *Moſes* the Son of *Maimonides* frequently make Mention, and other *Rabbins* beſides. We may juſtly call them the *Scholaſtick* Divines of the *Arabs*. Having learnt the Art of doubting from the ancient *Greeks*, and *Syrians*, they held Diſputes continually with the *Dogmatiſts*, giving no Credit to the Senſes and

(*a*) Maimonid. De Idoloi. CAP. ii. 3, 4, 5, 6.
(*b*) Numb. xv. 39.

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Understanding; holding it for a constant and capital Rule, that we can know Nothing. Insomuch that they even rejected all those *Geometrical* Demonstrations, which are taken to be infallible, as vain and deceitful. And what makes most for our *Subject*, the Chief of them who first received this Doctrine were principally so disposed, because it is very proper to captivate Mens Minds to the Obedience of *Faith* and Religion.

## CHAP. XV.

1. *From all this 'tis concluded we muſt doubt, as the only Way to avoid Errors.* 2. *Of which the Forwardneſs of the Dogmatiſts has produced an infinite Number.* 3. *The Academicks, and the Scepticks affirming Nothing cannot be deceived; and they only deſerve the Name of Philoſophers.*

*It is concluded from all which has been ſaid, that we muſt doubt; and that it is the only Way to avoid Errors.*

1. IT muſt be then agreed, that all *Philoſophy* both ſacred and profane; and not only the Profeſſors of doubting, but the *Dogmatiſts* themſelves would have us doubt, ſuſpend our Judgment, and not yield Aſſent too lightly. For they plainly ſaw that we cannot correct nor avoid Errors, unleſs by one general and perpetual *Doubt*, we diveſt our Minds of all the Opinions we have been prepoſeſſed with. Hereby *Des-Cartes* began the *Principles* of his *Philoſophy*, being perſwaded that by this Precaution we deſtroy the Root of Errors, and labour moſt ſecure-

ſecurely in the Search of Truth. But this very Man who by wiſe Foreſight was ſubmiſſive to this Law of doubting, relinquiſhed it afterwards, as if he had been to make no other Uſe of it, than to reject the Opinions of preceeding *Philoſophers*; and as inſignificant for the examining his own; ſo that by a Temerity like that of the *Dogmatiſts*, he committed the ſame Fault he reprehended in others.

*The Boldneſs of the Dogmatiſts has produced infinite Errors.*

2. As a Man who would go *to a Town* ſituated in the *Levant*, if ignorant of the Way, he travels towards the Weſt, will be in leſs Error by ſitting down in a croſs Road, than if he continues his Journey, and takes one of the different Ways that comes before him. So human Underſtanding depreſſed to Earth by Confinement to a terreſtial Body, and confeſſing that hereby the Way to *Truth* is precluded from it, will more ſurely avoid Lapſes and Errors by remaining in its Ignorance, and the *Doubt* which attends ignorance, than by vain Attempts to break through the Obſtructions, and inſtead of a *Juno* embrace Nothing in the End but a Cloud. Here's the Difference between the *Dogmatiſts* and the *Sceptick*s: what monſtrous Opinions

has not the Precipitation of the *Dogmatiſts* produced? of which *Cicero*, and *Varro*, Men of excellent Worth, and very well inſtructed in all Sects of *Philoſophy* have writ, as I have already obſerved, that we can ſay Nothing ſo abſurd, a Man in a Fever cannot conceive any delirious Dream, ſo ſtrange, but ſomewhat like it has been advanced by ſome *Philoſopher* or other.

*The Academicks, and Scepticks, affirming Nothing cannot be deceived, and they only deſerve the Name of Philoſophers.*

3. Both as to the *Academicks*, and *Scepticks*, what Abſurdities and ridiculous Opinions can we reproach them with, ſince they maintain no Opinions? Truly they only merit the Name of *Philoſophers*, if we ſtick to the true Signification of that Name. For *Philoſophy* being Nothing elſe, according to the Import of the Word, but the Study of Wiſdom and *Truth*; and Wiſdom, as it is defined by the Ancients, being the Science of divine and human Things, and Cauſes depending on them, they who apply themſelves to the Study of Wiſdom, deſerve the Name of true *Philoſophers*; and they who have acquired the *Science* of divine and human Things, that is to ſay, Wiſdom, are truly wiſe. Now it is this *Science* the *Dogmatiſts* boaſted they had obtained, and even ſuffered themſelves heretofore

to

to be dignified by the Name of *Sages*: a Name which *Pythagoras*, convinced of his Ignorance, was the firſt who rejected, to be called only a Lover of Wiſdom.

For as *Æſchylus* (*a*) the Poet very well obſerved, *to know by Conjecture is different from knowing clearly.* That Knowledge properly belonged to the *Academicks*, who not only confeſſed they actually knew Nothing, but moreover that they could not know any Thing of divine and human Things, and did no more than conſider them at a Diſtance. Let the *Dogmatiſts* uſurp then the Name of *Sages*, as much as they pleaſe, ſince they think they may take that Liberty, and imagine they have attained that *Science*, in which Wiſdom conſiſts; the *Academicks* and *Scepticks* will be content with the plain and modeſt Title of *Philoſophers*, for loving and reſpecting that Wiſdom, which ſo far ſurpaſſes their Capacity. In the mean Time *Lactantius* (*b*) in ſpeaking of them rightly ſaid, that thoſe

(*a*) Æſchyl. Agamemnon.
(*b*) Lactant. lib. iv. Cap. 1.

who in ſome Meaſure knew themſelves, were wiſer than ſuch as thought themſelves wiſe.

*The End of the Firſt Book.*

# OF THE WEAKNESS OF Human Underſtanding.

## BOOK II.

*The moſt ſure and legitimate Way of Philoſophizing exactly explained.*

CHAP. I. *Man is by Nature deſtitute of Means neceſſary to know Truth moſt evidently and infallibly; which though he may know in ſome Sort, he cannot know it clearly and moſt certainly.*

CHAP. II. *Faith ſupplies the Defect of Reaſon, and renders Things moſt certain which by Reaſon were leſs certain.*

CHAP. III. *There is Nothing in the Underſtanding, which was not firſt in the Senſes,* 2. *Againſt* Plato, 3. Proclus, 4. *and* Des-Cartes.

CHAP. IV. *In the Uſe of Life we muſt follow Things probable, as if they were true.*

CHAP. V. *Rule or Criterium of Probability.*

CHAP. VI. *What End to be propoſed in the Art of doubting.*

CHAP. VII. *We are not to tie ourſelves to the Sentiments of any Author.*

CHAP. VIII. *In every Sect we muſt chuſe that which appears to be beſt.*

CHAP. IX. *We muſt take Care to admit Nothing, contrary to Faith.*

CHAP. X. *The Sect of the Eclectick has been followed by great Men.*

CHAP. XI. *Since we are not to tie ourſelves to the Academick, Sceptick, Eclectick, nor to any other Sect, we are to adhere to our own Thoughts.*

CHAP

## CHAP. I.

*Man is by Nature unprovided of Means neceſſary to know Truth evidently and infallibly; which although he may know in ſome Sort, he cannot nevertheleſs know it clearly and moſt certainly.*

AFTER our *Provincial* had talked at this Rate, as he was preparing to continue his Diſcourſe; truly ſaid I, this confident and imperious Method of *Philoſophizing* I never reliſhed, which ſo obſtinately adheres to its own Thoughts and Opinions; and it ſeemed to me a much more compendious and direct Way to *Truth* to obſerve ſome Moderation in Opinions, with Modeſty in Diſcourſe, and never to maintain any *Tenet* how true ſoever, with ſo much Prejudice and Conceit, as not to be always ready to hear Objections, and even if requiſite to change our Mind. But on the other Hand, methinks the Inſtability of the Doctrine of

of the *Academicks*, much more ready to ſay what they do not think than what they do, flings a great Deal of Darkneſs and Confuſion in all Things, and deſtroys all *Science*, ſince according to them, we are no more aſſured we know what we know beſt, than if we knew Nothing at all of it.

For which Reaſon you will be kind if you pleaſe to teach me, to what Degree we are to carry *Doubt*. For if we always doubt, if every Thing be obſcure, hidden, and uncertain; if all the Ways to *Truth* are ſtopp'd, there is an End of *Philoſophy*; and all the Pains which have been taken for ſo many Ages to acquire the Knowledge of it, are totally loſt. See his Anſwer.

This Complaint you bring againſt the *Academicks* is not new: and, if juſt, would affect Nature it ſelf more than them. For is it the Fault of the *Academy*, if Man is by Nature ſo made, that he cannot of himſelf attain to the Knowledge of *Truth?* The *Academy* is no more anſwerable for this, than for Man's being unable to fly, or his not being immortal. Certainly we don't find the *Academicks* and the *Sceptick* gained leſs by the Study of Wiſdom or derived leſs Aſſiſtance from it, to

becom

become more wiſe and learned, than the *Dogmatiſts*. But of this hereafter. As to the preſent, ſince you would be informed how far I extend this Law of doubting, I am ready to explain my Opinion touching this capital Point, or rather Foundation of *Philoſophy:* for we are alone, and I may ſpeak with Freedom, and am not, neither ought I to be willing, to have what is ſaid ſpread among the Vulgar.

By the *Vulgar*, I mean not the little People who live by Labour of their Hands; but the learned *Vulgar*, who are accuſtomed to look upon the *Scepticks* and *Academicks*, as Men that are beſide themſelves. This makes me not diſreliſh their Sect the more, of which I ſhall now proceed to explain the whole *Syſtem*, or rather my own. Being willing to let you underſtand, that in Point of *Philoſophy* I would be free, follow my proper Sentiments, and be of no other Sect but my own.

Firſt, I believe it ſufficiently appears by all the Reaſons I have produced, that the Nature of Man is ſuch, that he cannot know *Truth* moſt certainly and infallibly by his own Power. I deny not but there is *Truth* to be found in Things themſelves, I mean that which is

is called *Truth of Exiſtence:* for God knows Things as they really are. But there is an Impediment in Man, which withholds him from it, and this Impediment conſiſts in the Want of proper and neceſſary Means to know *Truth* perfectly.

I ſay not that Man can have no Knowledge of *Truth*; but only that he cannot know it to the Bottom, clearly, and with abſolute Certainty, of which I have ſpoke already, and ſhall ſpeak farther. For poſſible it is that a Perſon may have an *Idea* imprinted in his Mind, which ſhall be like to an external Object: like it, I don't ſay, with a perfect, proper, and abſolute Reſemblance, which cannot be met with but in Things of the ſame Kind, as for Inſtance between one Man and another, but I ſpeak of an imperfect Reſemblance; ſuch as may happen between an *Original* and a *Copy*.

But when the Underſtanding in View of this *Idea* forms a Judgment of the external *Object*, from whence this *Idea* came, it cannot know moſt certainly and moſt clearly, whether this Judgment agrees with the external *Object* or not: and it is in this Agreement that *Truth* conſiſts, as I have ſaid. So that

if it does perceive *Truth*, it is not ſure of it, neither can be; and therefore comprehends *Truth* very imperfectly. When I ſay then that Man cannot know Things nor the *Truth* of Things, I mean by a certain and clear *Cognizance*, whereby we not only diſcern *Truth*, but are aſſured moreover moſt certainly that we do. For to know *Truth* without being at the ſame Time ſenſible of it, is much the ſame as if you knew it not.

I have aſſign'd Proofs above, evident enough to ſhew that Man cannot be ſatisfied, whether the Judgment he forms in View of an *Idea* imprinted in his Mind agrees with the external *Object*, from whence that Idea proceeded. The Chief of thoſe Proofs is, that we cannot apply the *Ideas* of Things, and the Judgment the Underſtanding forms in View of them to the Things themſelves, to examine and diſcover the Agreement of this Judgment with the external *Objects*; in which Agreement we ſay *Truth* conſiſts. For the *Species* or Images of Things, come not immediately into our Underſtanding from the Things themſelves; but paſs through many Mediums, as I have made appear, and through our Senſes, which diſfigure and diſorder them. And there

is

is no other Way, whereby the *Ideas* of Things can come to our Minds.

## CHAP. II.

*Faith ſupplies for the Defect of Reaſon, and renders Things moſt certain, which by Reaſon are leſs certain.*

BUT *God* by his Goodneſs repairs this Defect of human Nature, by granting us the ineſtimable Gift of *Faith*, which confirms our ſtaggering Reaſon and corrects that Perplexity of Doubts which we muſt bring to the Knowledge of Things. For Example; my Reaſon not being able to inform me with abſolute Evidence, and perfect Certainty, whether there are *Bodies*, what was the *Origin* of the World, and many other like Things; after I have received the *Faith*, all theſe Doubts vaniſh, as Darkneſs at the riſing of the Sun. This made St. *Thomas Aquinas* (*a*) ſay: *It is neceſſary for Man to receive as Articles of Faith*

(*a*) Thom. 22. Q. 2. A. 4.

*not only the Things which are above Reaſon, but even thoſe that for their Certainty may be known by Reaſon. For human Reaſon is very deficient in Things divine: A Sign of which we have from Philoſophers, who in the Search of human Things by natural Methods, have been deceived, and oppoſed each other on many Heads. To the End then that Men may have a certain and undoubted Cognizance of God, it was neceſſary Things divine ſhould be taught them by Way of Faith, as being revealed of God himſelf who cannot lie.*

This ſeems to be taken from that Paſſage of St. *Auguſtine*, which I have already cited, but for its Importance, and Relation to the preſent Subject, ought to be repeated: *viz.* (*b*) *Becauſe the Underſtanding of Men obſcured by Habits of Darkneſs with which they are veiled in the Night of Sin, cannot readily ſee the Clearneſs and Sanctity of Reaſon, it was a very wholſome Eſtabliſhment to provide that our wavering View, covered with the Duſt of Humanity ſhould be conducted towards the Light of Truth by Authority.*

(*b*) Auguſtin. De Morib. Eccleſ. Cathol. Cap. 2.

Then

Then St. *Thomas* adds afterwards: *No Search by natural Reaſon is ſufficient to make Men know Things divine, nor even thoſe which we can prove by Reaſon.* And in another Place he ſpeaks thus: (*c*) *Things which may be proved demonſtratively, as the Being of God, the Unity of the Godhead, and other Points, are placed among Articles we are to believe, becauſe previous to other Things that are of Faith: and theſe muſt be preſuppoſed at leaſt by ſuch as have no Demonſtration of them.*

What St. *Thomas* ſays of the Cognizance of divine Things, extends alſo to the Knowledge of human, according to the Doctrine of *Suarez.* (*d*) *We often correct*, ſays he, *the Light of Nature by the Light of Faith, even in Things which ſeem to be firſt Principles, as appears in this: thoſe Things that are the ſame to a third, are the ſame between themſelves; which, if we have Reſpect to the Trinity, ought to be reſtrained to finite Things. And in other Myſteries, eſpecially in thoſe of the Incarnation, and the Euchariſt, we uſe many other Limitations, that Nothing*

(*c*) Thom. 2. 2 Q. 1. A. 5. (*d*) Suar. Diſp. vi. de Fide, Sect. v. Art. ii.

*may be repugnant to the Faith. This is then an Indication that the Light of Faith is moſt certain, becauſe founded on the firſt Truth which is God, to whom it's more impoſſible to deceive, or be deceived, than for the natural Science of Man to be miſtaken and erroneous.*

(*e*) Saint *Auguſtine* likewiſe will not allow us even to attribute that Knowledge of *Truth* to Reaſon, which we believe our Underſtanding acquires by Reaſon, but to the Light of *Truth* it ſelf, with which it is illuminated in Proportion to its Capacity.

*To whom is Truth known without God?* ſays *Tertullian.* (*f*) *To whom is God known without Chriſt? To whom is Chriſt known without the holy Spirit? To whom is the holy Spirit communicated without Faith?*

From whence the Apoſtle (*g*) after he had pronounced theſe Words, *I will deſtroy the Wiſdom of the Wiſe, and bring to Nothing the Underſtanding of the prudent; where is the Wiſe? where is the Scribe? hath not God made fooliſh the Wiſdom of this World?* And having warned us not to be captivat-

(*e*) Auguſtin. de Serm. Dom. in monte, lib. ii. Cap. 5.
(*f*) Tertul. de Anim. Cap. 2. (*g*) 1 Cor. i. 19, 20.

ted *(a) through Philoſophy and vain Deceit, after the Tradition of Men, and the Rudiments of the World*, ſays, *by Faith we ſtand (b), walk (c) by Faith, and not by Sight*, and are *ſtabliſhed (d) in the Faith*. As then in Matters of *Faith*, *Faith* comes in to the Aid of fluctuating Reaſon, ſo it aſſiſts us in all other Things we know thereby, to aſſure and relieve us in our Doubts, and reinſtate Reaſon in a Right it was diveſted of, that is to ſay the Cognizance of *Truth*, which it naturally deſires.

## CHAP. III.

1. *There is Nothing in the Underſtanding which was not before in the Senſes*, 2. *Againſt* Plato, 3. Proclus, 4. *and* Des-Cartes.

*There is Nothing in the Underſtanding, which was not before in the Senſes.*

THEN ſaid I, (for I often interrupted him) what is it I heard ſo lately advanced, *viz.* that there is no Way, whereby the *Ideas* of Things come to our Underſtanding, but through Mediums interpoſed between the Underſtanding and *Objects*, and through the Senſes?

(*a*) Col. ii. 8. (*b*) 2 Cor. i. 24. (*c*) 2 Cor. v. 7. (*d*) Col. ii. 7.

ſes? Have we not *innate Ideas*, which never paſſed the Senſes, as for Inſtance; the *Ideas* of *Angels*, and of *God* derived from our Underſtanding itſelf? As likewiſe of thoſe Maxims, or common Notions which *Logicians* call *Axioms?* Do we not know thoſe univerſal Natures of Things, commonly called *Eſſences*, to be true, immutable, eternal, and not liable to Depravation by the Senſes, like *Ideas* that come from without?

You anticipate, he anſwered: The Order of Things of which I promiſed you the Explanation, will lead me to that. Indeed this is a capital Queſtion, and has been immenſely diſcuſſed by the *Princes* of *Philoſophy*. For *Pythagoras*, *Timæus*, and other *Pythagoreans*, *Socrates*, *Plato*, and all the *Platonicks* maintain, that we bring *Ideas* with us into the World. On the contrary, *Democritus* and his Follower *Epicurus*, *Ariſtotle*, and the whole School of the *Peripateticks*, rejected all *innate Ideas*, and acknowledged no other but thoſe that came to us from without, paſſed through the Senſes, and which we formed to our ſelves. I will give you my Opinion, ſince it is your Deſire, and the Order of this Diſpute leads us thereto. You will hear that which will not be to the Re-

liſh of all the World, nor perhaps to your own Approbation.

As to *Plato*'s Opinion touching inbred *Ideas*, that Sentiment ſeemed to me formerly to be much more honourable to Man, and to exalt his Dignity higher than the other, I greatly deſired it might prove true: As appearing glorious to human Nature, that our Underſtanding ſhould be given us, after its being firſt embeliſhed by the Hand of *God*, and inriched with theſe Gifts of Heaven. I ſought then for Proofs from all Quarters, to convince myſelf, and others alſo of the Truth of this Opinion. I found certain ſpecious Reaſonings in *Plato*, ſome in *Proclus* and other *Platonicks*, which might move one who was not very attentive. But thoſe very Reaſonings ſeemed to me of no Strength, when I ceaſed to give into that Pride which is natural to all Men.

*Againſt Plato.*

2. The principal and only Argument almoſt which *Socrates* in *Plato* makes Uſe of, to prove we bring theſe *Ideas* into the World with us, prevailed with him to ſay, that human Underſtanding could not collect and conceive this innumerable Variety of Notions we have, in ſo ſhort a Time as that of our Life, (being immerſed as it is in the Maſs of

our Bodies which depreſſes and clouds it) if it did not carry them already produced and formed in itſelf, and that accordingly we learn not what is taught us, but only remember it.

Such Diſcourſe would better become an Orator who ſpeaks in Publick, than a Philoſopher. For who will deny theſe Things, and ſay with me that human Underſtanding is of ſuch a Nature, that it is very eaſily put in Action, when the *Senſes* being ſtruck by exterior *Objects*, and the *Fibres* of the *Nerves* and *Spirits* moved, the Brain receives the Impreſſion thereof; that the Underſtanding advertiſed by this Impreſſion of the Brain of what paſſes without, agitates the *Spirits* in its Turn, and making a Review on the delicate Strokes traced and delineated in the Brain, joining what is ſeparated, ſeparating what is conjoined, comparing Things which are related, conſiders the preſent, and ſees what precedes and follows it; on which depends the Conduct of Life, and the Affinity of Sciences: Who, I ſay, will hold this Language, what will *Plato* anſwer to this?

3. The Proofs *Proclus* produces, are of greater Weight. He ſays all that comes from the Senſes is ſubject to *Againſt Proclus.*

Change, and Man has *Ideas* or *Species* imprinted in his Underſtanding, which are eternal and immutable, namely the *Ideas* of *Figures*, *Numbers*, and *Motions*, and conſequently could not iſſue from the Senſes: Otherwiſe if *Ideas* ſo fixed and conſtant came from the Senſes, ſo weak and ſubject to Error, the Effect would be more perfect than the Cauſe. But for my Part, I know Nothing of theſe eternal *Ideas*. For Inſtance; the Idea I have of a *Triangle*, a Thing obſcure and confuſed, which is not circumſcribed nor determined, was produced in me by the *Ideas* of particular *Triangles* I have ſeen. The ſame may be ſafely ſaid of all thoſe Ideas, which are taken to be of *ſimple and pure Intelligence*.

*Proclus* adds that the beſt Demonſtrations are thoſe which are compoſed of the moſt univerſal *Propoſitions*, and that the moſt imperfect Demonſtrations are compoſed of particular *Propoſitions*: that at the ſame Time it would not be ſo, if Things univerſal were produced by particulars, ſeeing what is produced by the Cauſe is preferable to what is produced by the Effect. On this I will not diſpute the Strength of Demonſtrations, compoſed either of univerſal or par-

ticular *Propoſitions*: I only declare that what is produced by the Cauſe is always preferable to what is produced by the Effect. For to feed a Sheep, the Graſs is of more Worth, than the Earth which produceth it: So to form a Demonſtration, univerſal *Propoſitions* are more uſeful than particular, although the univerſal are compoſed of the particular, and which depend on the Senſes.

The third Argument of *Proclus*, is that if human Underſtanding receives from Matter and Things ſenſible its principal and moſt clear *Ideas*, and which moreover exiſt, Matter will have the Aſcendant of the Underſtanding: It is the ſame as to ſay, that the Marble which the Carver *Praxiteles* made Uſe of, to form the Statue of *Venus*, was more noble than *Praxiteles*, becauſe it virtually contained that Statue of *Venus* which *Praxiteles* drew from it.

*And againſt Des-Cartes.*

4. *Des-Cartes* took a Way very different, but as uncertain as the former, if I am not miſtaken. For of the three Kinds of *Ideas* he propoſes, the firſt he will have to come from without, as the *Idea* I have of the Sun, and which was formed in me by the Sight I had of that Luminary; the ſecond he will have to be factitious, and formed in us by

our ſelves, as the *Idea* of the Sun which is in the Underſtanding of the *Aſtronomer*, formed on his Reaſonings and Obſervations; and the third he will have natural, or innate, as the *Idea* of God, and the *Ideas* of *Geometrical Principles*, and of *Eſſences*, of theſe three Kinds of *Ideas*, I ſay, propoſed by *Des-Cartes*, 'tis clear that the two firſt come from the Senſes. As to the third, if we conſider it with Attention, we ſhall find that according to the very Reaſonings of *Des-Cartes*, it may very well come from thence too. For ſince according to him theſe natural or innate *Ideas* are the very Faculty of thinking which is in our Underſtanding, it follows that the *Idea* we have of *God*, is Nothing elſe but the Faculty in us of forming Thoughts of *God*; as other natural *Ideas* which are in our Underſtanding are born with us, are Nothing elſe but the Faculty we have of forming Thoughts of them.

Now this Faculty of thinking, to whatever *Subject* we apply it, of which we can have any Thought or Conception, be it of *God*, *Man*, or the *Sun*, is always the ſame Faculty. As that of ſinging; whether we tune a Courant, a Saraband, or a Minuet, is always the ſame

aculty. This being ſo, ſince the Faculwhich is in me of forming Thoughts, ther of the *Sun*, or of a *Man*, came to e from without; by Conſequence the *dea* of *God* which is in me came from ithout.

*Des-Cartes* himſelf acknowledges there no Difference between theſe *Ideas*, hen he ſays, that even the *Idea* we ve of a *Man*, or the *Sun*, comes not us from without, but that our Underanding forms them to itſelf, after it s been excited, and ſtirred by certain rporeal Motions; and that for much eater Reaſon, the ſame muſt be ſaid the *Ideas* of Things, which are not rmed by our Underſtanding, after it s been excited by corporeal Motions: ch as the *Idea* of *God*, the *Ideas* of *ſſences*, and of the *Axioms* of *Geome-y*: Which *Des-Cartes* could not ſay ithout attributing the ſame *Origin*, and e ſame Nature, both to *Ideas* that me to us from without, and to thoſe calls natural, which he pretends to inbred, or born with us.

As to my ſelf, having learned that exellent *Philoſophers* have been convined, that human Underſtanding was inſted and adorned with all theſe Adntages, not by the Favour of the Senſes,

ſes, but from its *Origin*, I often, and for a long Time uſed my utmoſt Endeavour to diſcover theſe hidden Treaſures of my Mind, and to diſtinguiſh the Endowments I received of Nature, from thoſe which came to me from without, and were acquired. But whatever Diligence I brought to this Enquiry, I could find no *Idea* in my ſelf, that appeared not moſt clearly to come from without, and whereof I knew not the Riſe in the external *Objects* to which it was to be aſcribed, and the Way likewiſe whereby it found Entrance into my Underſtanding.

I believed then I might judge of the Underſtanding of others by my own. For I may ſafely affirm, that whoever will lay aſide Self-love, not think too well of himſelf, and look into the inmoſt Receſſes of his Mind, will find no *Idea* therein that was not formed upon the *Species* of external *Objects*.

Thoſe of a contrary Opinion ask, from whence I had the Idea of a *Triangle*. I anſwer, it came to me from an infinite Number of *Triangles* I have ſeen, from whence I made to myſelf an obſcure and confuſed *Idea* of a *Triangle*, which was not bounded, nor circumſcribed by determinate Limits. They

ask

ſk from whence I had the *Idea* of a particular Number, as of *four*. I anſwer, t came to me from the Multitude of Things I have ſeen of that Number, as he four Feet of a Horſe, the four Angles of a Square, or likewiſe I may have formed it by my own Underſtanding, which might eaſily to two Things I have frequently ſeen, add two other; or one to three; and afterwards conceive that Number abſtracted and ſeparate.

They ask how I came by the *Idea* of Motion. I anſwer, it came to me from many Motions of Bodies I have ſeen; from whence my Underſtanding ſeparating Motion from the Thing moved, formed a certain *Idea* of Motion; not a clear, pure, and expreſs *Idea* of it, but imperfect and confuſed.

They ask from whence I had this Notion, that two Things equal to a Third are equal between themſelves. anſwer, it came to me by many Obſervations made of Things, meaſured on the ſame Standard and found to be equal; beſides my Underſtanding was no leſs able to form it of its own Strength, by figuring ſome imaginary Meaſure, to which it mentally applied two Things, and finding them equal to this Meaſure, they appeared to be equal between them-

themſelves. And from thence that general unfixed Notion, abſtracted from all Kinds of external *Objects* was formed in me, *viz.* that as oft as two Things agree with a third, they agree between themſelves.

They ask me how I came to the *Idea* of a *God*, and Things incorporeal. *Saint Thomas Aquinas* (*a*) anſwers excellently well, that *Things incorporeal of which there are no Species, are known to us by comparing them to ſenſible Bodies, whereof there are Species: As we know Truth by Conſideration of Things, in which we contemplate Truth.* He adds moreover, according to the Opinion of St. *Denys*, that we know *God* as *univerſal Cauſe*, and to ſpeak in the Language of the *Schools*, *by Exceſs and Abſtraction*; and that while we are confined to this mortal Body, we have no Knowledge of Things incorporeal, but *by Abſtraction and Compariſon to the corporeal*, and it is neceſſary for this End *to have Recourſe to Species of Bodies, Things incorporeal having no Species.*

But too much of this, although it be a capital Point; for there are thoſe who

(*a*) Thom. Part 1. Q. 84. A. 7. *and* 8.

from

rom this vain Fiction of natural *Ideas*, raw ſtrange Concluſions. Let us then eturn to our *Subject*, ſaid our *Philoſo-her*, unleſs you have any Thing to of-er.

I anſwered, I have Nothing to object ow againſt the *Theſis* you maintain; hat all we conceive paſſed the Senſes, ither in the Whole or in Part: for I eſire your Sentiments, having no Need t this Time to propoſe my own. Pro-eed then if you pleaſe to explain what s behind. And thus he began.

It ought then to be granted that we annot know *Truth*, and therefore what-ver Diligence and Attention we apply o obtain it, whatever Likelihood or Evi-ence we meet with, we are not abſo-utely to yield Aſſent, but always to be n our Guard. It follows too from hat has been ſaid, that thoſe who un-ertake the Search of *Truth* exempt om all Doubt, give themſelves uſeleſs rouble; *Truth* being above the Reach f human Capacity. As to the reſt, hat I ſaid in the Introduction of this iſcourſe, in Relation to the ſeveral De-rees and Kinds of Certainty, muſt not e forgot: For we treat at preſent of upreme and abſolute Certainty of moſt con-

conſummate Perfection, which neithe Reaſon, nor the Senſes can give, an we ſhall never enjoy, 'till we are unite to *God*, who is the Fountain of *Truth*.

But I deny not that while we are im merſed in this Body, our Underſtand ing may attain to that ſupreme huma Certainty, (*a*) *which though covere with Darkneſs in the Night of Sin, an obſcured by the Vail* of *Mortality*, (a St. *Auguſtine* ſpeaks) has its Penetrati on, and can turn its Eyes towards *Truth* if not ſteadily, and without being dazl'd at leaſt with lively and piercing View As from *Libya*, a Promontory of *Sicily* altho' I cannot diſcern nor number th Veſſels that go out of the Port of *Car thage*, I can do it when I come nea them: And although I cannot look o the Sun, I can on the Moon and Star The Underſtanding is the Eye of th Soul: *Truth* the Sun whoſe Rays ou Sight cannot bear, if they are not brok or modified, either by Reflection, Re fraction, or the Interpoſition of ſom Medium, to proportion and adapt ther to our Weakneſs.

(*a*) Auguſtin. De Morib. Eccl. Cathol. Cap. 2.

CHA

## CHAP. IV.

### *In the Uſe of Life we ſhould follow Things probable as true.*

OUR Intent is not then to extinguiſh all the Light of the Mind; we cannot believe our Underſtanding is in perpetual Error, deſtitute of all Counſel and Rule for the Conduct of Life; not knowing even which Way to turn, as thoſe who are miſinformed of our Sentiments frequently object. We move not by the Light of the Sun, at Noon Day, yet walk at leaſt in the reflected Light of the Moon; and if we want a certain Knowledge of *Truth*, we have at leaſt ſome likelihoods of it.

To ſay ſuch and ſuch Things appear to us to be true, is not ſaying they are ſo: For to appear, and to be, are very different. Moreover that theſe Things do ſo much as appear to be true I do not affirm; but only that they ſeem ſo to me. For as I own what is likely is uncertain, I own alſo the *Idea* of Likelihood is uncertain. In ſo much that when I declare

declare a Thing ſeems to me to be probable, at the ſame Time I think it liable to Uncertainty. Now thoſe Likelihoods and Probabilities we are to follow in the Uſage of Life for Want of Truth, whether it be when the natural Inclinations of our Underſtanding and Senſes incite us, when preſſed by the Cravings of our Appetites, as by Hunger and Thirſt; when we are to obſerve Cuſtoms and Laws; or to practiſe neceſſary Arts. On the other Hand we ought to reject as falſe, what has neither Likelihood nor Probability: And not remain utterly inactive, like Stocks and Stones.

When we are asked then, whether we allow of Opinion, we would have this Term *Opinion* be freed from wrong Acceptations to which it is ſubject. For *Opinion* is called the Conſent which may be given to Things doubtful, in Study and Diſputations of *Philoſophy*, and the affirming a Thing uncertain to be true: Now a wiſe Man ought to divest himſelf of theſe Kinds of *Opinions*. And here that Saying of *Theognis* is applicable; *Opinion is a great Evil among Men, but Experience on the contrary moſt uſeful.* For in Point of *Truth*, the chief Law is not to yield our Belief and Aſſen-

Aſſent lightly and inconſiderately, and to affirm Nothing raſhly. If by the Word *Opinion*, be underſtood the Determination and Reſolution we take to follow what is probable in the Uſe of Life, we forbid not ſuch Opinions.

A like Diſtinction muſt be brought to the Terms of *Belief* and *Conſent*. If that had been done, an End might have been put to great Conteſts which very much exerciſed the ancient *Academicks*. We are then to apply the ſame Care and Diligence to diſcern Things probable, as ſome would have us bring to the Search of *Truth*. And as others regulate their Lives on what they believe to be true, we ſquare ours by what appears to us moſt likely. And are not to be called *Zeteticks*, that is to ſay, *Seekers*, but for endeavouring to find what is probable.

## CHAP. V.

### *Rule or* CRITERIUM *of Probability.*

AS the *Dogmatiſts* have a CRITERIUM, or Rule to diſcern *Truth* from Falſhood, whether it be the Senſes,

the Underſtanding, or both: we alſo have a Rule of *Truth* to diſcern Things probable from thoſe which are not ſo. What I have already ſaid, makes it ſufficiently intelligible, that there are two Rules, not to mention any more; the one near, the other remote: The near is the Diſpoſition of the *Fibres* of the Brain, and Form of the *Traces*, which either the *Nerves* or *Spirits*, ſhaken by external *Objects*, and by Means of the Senſes have left in the Brain; and the *Ideas* produced thereby. For the Underſtanding perceiving theſe *Ideas* and theſe *Traces*, forms its Judgment on their Cauſe, Origin and Signification, making a ſuitable Eſtimate of the *Species* of Things, whereon Probability depends. The remote Rule of *Truth* to diſcern it, are the Senſes, which ſtruck by external *Objects*, make certain *Traces* in the Brain by the *Nerves* and *Spirits*, which when perceived, the Underſtanding judges of external *Objects*.

CHAP

## CHAP. VI.

### *The End propoſed in the Art of doubting.*

HAving propoſed the Rule of *Truth* which makes the Plan of our Doctrine, we muſt likewiſe explain the End of it. What all the Parts of a *Syſtem* aim at, I call its End, as being the laſt Thing we would obtain by it. Now this *Syſtem* has two Ends likewiſe, the one near, the other remote. The near, is the avoiding Error, Obſtinacy, and Arrogance. The remote, to prepare the Mind for the Reception of divine *Faith*. For ſince we were created by *God*, to love and ſerve him during this Life, and to enjoy eternal *Beatitude* after Death, the Doctrine I eſtabliſh, furniſhes us with great Aſſiſtance for this Purpoſe. For *God* has given us in our Birth and Nature a great Deſire of *Beatitude*, there being no Perſon whatever who would not be happy. And becauſe the Knowledge of *Truth* is one Part of *Beatitude*, even ſo far that

ſome, and thoſe not contemptible *Philoſophers*, have made their *chief Good* to conſiſt in the Acquiſition of *Science*, we find a great Deſire in our ſelves to know *Truth*, and a great Propenſity to ſeek it.

But as this mortal Life is not capable of *Beatitude* nor *Truth*, we have then no more than a natural Inclination to know it, and this Inclination is a Spur that excites us to ſeek *Beatitude*, wherein the perfect Knowledge of *Truth* conſiſts. For *Beatitude* conſiſts in the *Viſion* of *God*, the eternal, immenſe, and inexhauſtible Fountain of *Truth*. To excite and feed this Deſire of knowing, he has annexed to Man's Underſtanding, ſome Sparks and Seeds thereof, to keep it alive, and an obſcure and dubious Apprehenſion of Things inſufficient to give us the Knowledge of *Truth* with abſolute Certainty, and perfect Evidence; but enough for the Conduct of Life; and whereby Man being advertiſed of his Weakneſs and Ignorance, ſhould entertain a juſt Diſtruſt of his Reaſon, avoid Error, Precipitation of Judgment, Imprudence of Aſſent and Belief, laying aſide all Obſtinacy; and being made ſenſible of the little Aſſiſtance he can obtain from his own Reaſon for the Diſcovery of

*Truth*

*Truth*, finds himſelf obliged to ſeek Means more conducive to that End.

Now the grand Expedient is *Faith*, whereby Man during his Life gains ſome Knowledge of *God*, and Things *divine*; and having finally acquired *Beatitude* after Death, enjoys the perfect Knowledge of *Truth*. *For*, as the *Apoſtle* (*a*) teaches us, *we know now but in Part: but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in Part ſhall be done away. For now we ſee through a Glaſs darkly, but then Face to Face.* But *Faith* is a Gift that *God* is pleaſed to grant them who truſt not too much to the Strength of Nature, preſume not too far on the Penetration of their Reaſon, nor eſpouſe their own Sentiments with affected Obſtinacy, but diligently prepare their Minds to receive it. And this Effect, that *Art* of *doubting* we here eſtabliſh, produces.

Adhering then to Things probable for Want of true, let us make Uſe of that incompleat and imperfect Knowledge *God* has allowed us, and which ſuffices for the Conduct of Life, and is principally uſeful to ſubject our Underſtanding to *Faith*. Let us alſo em-

(*a*) 1 Cor. iii. 9, 10, 12.

ploy this imperfect Knowledge in the Study of *Philoſophy*, leſt we take Things unknown for known, and fall into Error, which we ſhould be aſhamed not to avoid when it is in our Power.

## CHAP. VII.

### *Not to tie our ſelves to the Sentiments of any Author.*

ABOVE all Things, let us take Care not to tie our ſelves to the Sentiments of any *Author*, nor be a Party in any Sect, eſpecially of the *Dogmatiſts*, who believing they can by the Help of Reaſon, attain to a certain and unqueſtionable Knowledge of *Truth*, fail in Principles and ſtumble in the very Preliminaries of *Philoſophy*. Neither are we to give up our ſelves ſo far to the *Academicks* and *Scepticks*, as not to be ready to forſake them, if we are to do ſo upon weighing all Things in a juſt Ballance, ever reſerving to our ſelves an abſolute Liberty of thinking and

and ſpeaking on all Matters of *Philoſophy*.

For as *Arceſilas* left the Syſtem of *Pyrrho*, *Carneades* that of *Arceſilas*, *Philo* that of *Carneades*, and *Antiochus* that of *Philo*, it is but juſt that we ſhould have the ſame Right. For Example, we forſake the *Academicks* and *Scepticks* for making Profeſſion of examining and conſidering all Things in Search of *Truth*, which procured them the Name of *Zeteticks*, i. e. Seekers: For what *Truth* have they found by ſo long and conſtant a Search? They ſhould have ſaid they endeavoured to avoid Falſity and Error, and not that they ſought *Truth*. We avoid both, by ſuſpending our Judgment, and withholding Belief and Conſent, which is in our Power: but it is not in our Power to come to a clear and certain Knowledge of *Truth*, as I have made appear. A moſt vain and frivolous Attempt it is to ſeek what we cannot find.

We leave the *Scepticks* moreover on many other Heads, but principally as to what reſpects the Advantages they propoſe to themſelves; theſe they will have to conſiſt in a fixed and conſtant State of Mind, ſubject to no Trouble: in Things that depend on *Opinion*, they

call it *Ataraxie*; and in Things which are forced, and do not depend on us, they call it *Metriopathy*; that is to ſay Moderation and Reſolution to bear them. But we make the Advantages we propoſe to our ſelves conſiſt in avoiding Obſtinacy and Arrogance, and in preparing the Mind to receive *divine Faith.*

## CHAP. VIII.

### *We ought in every Sect to chuſe what appears to be beſt.*

WIthout adhering to any Sect, we examine all, and gather out of each for our Uſe what has ſome Appearance of *Truth*; and all our Attention we apply to what is ſaid, without ſiding with him who ſaid it. So that if by our Induſtry we can find any Thing of Uſe, we hold to it, and do not relinquiſh our own Intereſt: yet without ever deviating from this Sovereign Law of *doubting*, always ready to reject what we have approved, ſo ſoon

ſoon as we find ſomewhat more probable: ſtill reſerving an abſolute Liberty of Judgment, never ſubmitting to Neceſſity nor Authority.

## CHAP. IX.

### *Above all we are to beware of admitting any Thing contrary to Faith.*

WE take a great Deal of Caution more eſpecially, to admit Nothing contrary to revealed *Faith:* holding for moſt certain and unqueſtionable what *God* has introduced into our Souls by *Faith,* the Guide and Miſtreſs of Reaſon; and looking on every Thing which Reaſon teaches us as dubious.

## CHAP. X.

### *The Sect of the Eclecticks embraced by great Men.*

AS to the Reſt, in this free and unconfined Way of *Philoſophizing*, running through all Sects we follow the Example of many great Men: eſpecially of *Plato*, who formed his out of the Opinions of *Pythagoras*, *Epicharmus*, *Parmenides*, *Heraclitus*, and *Socrates*, and inriched it with the Doctrine of the *Egyptians*. For he took the Method of applying Numbers, and geometrical *Demonſtrations* to Things natural; and of examining the Nature of what we conceive by our Underſtanding from *Pythagoras*: the Way of ſtudying the Cauſes and Effects of our Senſations from *Heraclitus*: had the Doctrine of *Ideas* from *Epicharmus*: *Morality*, *Politicks*, and *Oeconomicks* from *Socrates*, borrowed the Manner of explaining his Doctrine, by Fictions and Fables, of the *Egyptians*.

Althoug

Although *Cicero* was for being eſteemed an *Academick*, he was converſant nevertheleſs in the Schools of other *Philoſophers*; drew from thence and appropriated to himſelf every Thing that was to his Reliſh: for he would have paſſed for a *Socratick* and a *Platonick*. Adhered ſometimes to the *Stoicks*, and ſometimes entirely to himſelf. *Horace* (*a*) follows not *Ariſtippus* and *Epicurus* ſo faithfully as not to be a *Peripatetick* or a *Stoick*, without eſpouſing the Doctrine of either. *Seneca* (*b*) openly declares he ſubſcribes to no Man, and would not bear the Name of any Sect; ſays he has very much Deference for the Judgment of great Men, but ſome for his own; that he keeps in his own Road; hearkens to and depends wholly upon himſelf to find out ſome new Diſcovery, and to alter and relinquiſh it as he thinks fit; that he is not a Slave to thoſe who have gone before him, although he may aſſent to them.

Did any one propoſe ſomewhat to Purpoſe, he embraced and applied it to his own Uſe: Said that we muſt do the

(*a*) Horat. Carm. libr. i. od. 34. & Epiſt. libr. i. Epiſt. 1. (*b*) Seneca. Epiſt. 16, 21, 33, 46, 80. de Otio. Sap. 30.

ſame

ſame in *Philoſophy* as in the Senate Houſe: when any one there propoſed his Advice which one Party liked, and another did not; the Advice was conſidered, and that taken out of it which was thought to be moſt ſerviceable; for to tie one ſelf inſeparably to any other Perſon, is not Aſſociation, but Faction: ridiculed thoſe ſervile Philoſophers who always tread in other Mens Steps in that important *Search* they undertake; I mean the Search of *Truth*, which Men do ſtill ſeek, and have ſought ſo long, but will never find; particularly if they reſt ſatisfied with what is already diſcovered: Forbids not walking in the beaten Track: but if we meet with another that is more uniform, would have us follow it. Although he ſided with the *Stoicks*, often forſook them, and became an *Epicurean*.

I cannot excuſe my ſelf from citing *Origen* (*c*), who was accuſtomed to ranſack the Schools of *Philoſophers*, and carry off ſome Prey or other. Imitating the Practice of *Clemens Alexandrinus* (*d*) his Maſter, who thought that the only Sect worthy of the Name o

(*c*) Origenian. libr. ii. Cap. 1. §. 4. (*d*) Clem Alex. Strom. libr. i.

*Philoſ*

*Philoſophy*, which did not cry up *Plato*, *Ariſtotle*, *Epicurus*, or *Zeno* for its Author, but took what was beſt out of all, and is called *Eclectick*. *Lactantius* (*e*) is of the ſame Mind; declares he will follow thoſe who collect that *Truth* which is ſcattered in the different Sects, and reduce it into one Body; but ſays this muſt be done by a Man who knows *Truth*; and that none can know it, but he who is inſtructed of God: ſharply reproves thoſe who adhering to a particular Party, reject all other as vain and falſe, ignorantly oppoſe and refuſe by Prepoſſeſſion the Reaſons of their Adverſaries.

In that Sect of *Phyſicians* called *Methodick*, which comes very near to the Doctrine of the *Scepticks* according to the Teſtimony of *Sextus Empiricus*, ſome have profeſſed themſelves to be *Eclecticks*. *Archigenes* of *Apamea* was of this Number. That new Society of *Engliſh Philoſophers*, which has produced ſo many excellent *Vertuoſi*, condemns the Arrogance of the *Dogmatiſts*, and without adhering to any Sect, is wholly taken up in chuſing and cultivating what has been found hitherto to be beſt, or

(*e*) Lactant. lib. vii. Cap. 7.

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to diſcover ſome Thing better, is more worthy to be followed than thoſe who went before them. If I add to this Liſt all who are not ſo devoted to any Sect, as not to reſerve to themſelves the Liberty of making Inroads into other and plundering them, their Number will be infinite.

Againſt this Method, Somebody will alledge to me the Contradiction which muſt be found amongſt theſe collected *Opinions*. For being drawn from different Principles, it is not likely they ſhould agree. But my Meaning is that we ſhould begin this Choice by the Principles themſelves: for after we have ſettled them, we ſhall not admit of any *Opinions* which agree not with themſelves, and theſe Principles too. If any one, for Example, allows a *Vacuum* with *Democritus*, he will be ridiculous if he maintains with *Des-Cartes*, that the Nature of Bodies conſiſts in their Extent, in Longitude, Latitude, and Profundity.

We ſhall be very much miſtaken if we believe that *Potamon*, and the *Eclecticks*, of whom he was the principal, were ſo inconſiderate as to embrace repugnant and contradictory *Opinions*. He formed a certain *Syſtem*, the Ele-

ments of which he included in a little Book. Without doubt there was to be found in it ſome Relation and Agreement between the Parts of the *Syſtem*. We muſt believe the ſame of the other *Eclecticks*, who were ſo circumſpect therein, that they ſubmitted not even to all the Opinions of *Potamon*, but only to his Method of taking from all Hands what ſeemed to be beſt. As to my ſelf, though I very much approve this Way, I pretend not to paſs for a *Potamonician* or an *Eclectick*; for that would be to be tied to a Sect, which I would avoid above all Things, for Fear of depriving my ſelf of my own Sentiments.

Beſides, there is ſome Appearance that *Potamon* was a *Dogmatiſt*: and it may be well conjectured from thoſe who have collected the principal Heads of his *Syſtem*, not mentioning any one of them that agrees with the Sects which eſtabliſh the Law of *doubting*; and you ſhall hardly find one Man among the *Eclecticks*, who adhered to the *Academicks* or the *Scepticks*. In ſhort there are many Points, as to which I am of very different Sentiments from thoſe of *Potamon*, and the other *Eclecticks*.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XI.

*Since we are not to adhere either to the Sect of the Academicks, Scepticks, Eclecticks, or to any other, we are to adhere to our own Opinions.*

IF any one ſhould ask me now what I am, not being either an *Academick*, *Sceptick*, *Eclectick*, or of any other Sect; I muſt anſwer I am my own, that is to ſay at Liberty, unwilling to ſubmit to any Authority, and approving Nothing but what appears to me to come neareſt to *Truth*. If any one out of Mockery or Flattery, call us ἰδιαζηνώμονας, *i. e.* wedded to our own Sentiments; I have Nothing to ſay againſt it.

*The End of the Second Book.*

# OF THE WEAKNESS OF Human Underſtanding.

## BOOK III.

*The Objections of our Adverſaries propoſed, and refuted.*

CHAP. I. *Firſt Objection, that we deſtroy the Uſe of Life.*
CHAP. II. *Second Objection, that we deprive our ſelves of Science.*

CHAP. III. *Third Objection, that we have a Criterium, or Rule of diſcerning Truth from Falſhood.*

CHAP. IV. *Fourth Objection, that our Manner of Philoſophizing makes no Sect.*

CHAP. V. *Fifth Objection, that when we ſay there is no Truth, Falſhood, nor Demonſtration, we condemn our ſelves.*

CHAP. VI. *Sixth Objection, that we can ſcarcely doubt without Impiety, if God has not made Man, ſo as to be always deceived.*

CHAP. VII. *Seventh Objection, that this Law of doubting, ſeems to hinder the Mind of Man from ſubmitting to Faith, and to favour Immorality.*

CHAP. VIII. *Objections of our Adverſaries anſwered.*

CHAP. IX. *Firſt Objection.*

CHAP. X. *Second Objection.*

CHAP. XI. *Third Objection.*

CHAP. XII. *Fourth Objection.*

CHAP. XIII. *Fifth Objection.*

CHAP. XIV. *Sixth Objection.*

CHAP. XV. *Seventh Objection.*

CHAP. XVI. *Why the Doctrine of the Academicks and Scepticks, has been rejected.*

CHAP. XVII. *Concluſion.*

CHAP

## CHAP. I.

### *Firſt Objection, that we deſtroy the Uſe of Life.*

BElieve not, my Friends, I complied with this captious Doctrine with no Reluctancy, to betray true *Philoſophy* by a cowardly Silence. On the contrary I zealouſly held with the *Dogmatiſts*. I will give you an Account of the Sequel of our Conference. For our *Provincial* believing he had exhauſted this Matter, abſolutely convinced me, and eſtabliſhed his *Syſtem* beyond all Contradiction; cloſed his Diſſertation with theſe Words: You have heard the Diſcourſe of a Man who ſeems perhaps to want Modeſty, having been bold to place my ſelf before you, not only as an Arbitrator, but even as a Cenſor and Reformer among ſo many able *Philoſophers*. But it was your Province to preſcribe, and mine to obey; I thought I ſhould incur a leſs Fault in undertaking to examine theſe perplexed and difficult Queſtions, than to fail

in juſt Reſpects to the Deſire of a Perſon I profeſs my ſelf to love and honour.

Moſt certainly, ſaid I to him, you have done me a great Favour by entring into Inquiries that have agreeably inſtructed me, and upon which it will be very delightful hereafter, to make both long and ſerious Reflections. But think not your ſelf wholly diſcharged from this Trouble you have been pleaſed to engage in at my Requeſt. For you are now to oppoſe a Batallion of *Dogmatiſts*, a mutinous and untractable Race, whoſe Attacks I fear you will not be able to ſuſtain. Here's the firſt Aſſault they will make: You have clearly foreſeen; but ſeem not to have totally avoided it. They ſay the *Philoſophy* you follow, allowing us not to hearken to the Teſtimony of our Senſes, puts out the Eye of the Underſtanding, confounds *Truth* with Falſhood, deprives Man of his own Approbation and Judgment, and conſequently *overthrows the State of Life*, to ſpeak with *Tertullian* (*a*); diſturbs the whole *Oeconomy* of Nature, takes away all Kind of Action and allows Nobody the Liberty to move.

(*a*) Tertull. De Anim. Cap. 17.

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## CHAP. II.

### *Second Objection, that it deprives Men of Science.*

WE diſſent not, ſay you, from Cuſtoms, obey Laws, and comply with other Men, leſt we ſhould ſtand fixed to the Earth like Stocks of Trees. But then you deprive your ſelves of *Science* and the clear Light of the Underſtanding, without leaving in it the leaſt Spark to aſſiſt you to diſcern *Truth*. It was for this Reaſon chiefly that in Proceſs of Time, the Sect of *Pyrrhonians* was extinguiſhed, or rejected by the *Pagans*. For if it had been received all other *Sciences* muſt have been abandoned. Therefore few or no learned Men have been known to come out of the Schools of *Scepticks*, nor likewiſe from the modern *Academy*, which I agree with you to have been true *Pyrrhoniſm*.

## CHAP. III.

### *Third Objection, that we have a* CRITERIUM, *or Rule of diſcerning Truth from Falſhood.*

IN ſaying you follow Likelihoods for Want of *Truth*, is to us of as little Satisfaction. For if you allow that there is ſome Appearance of *Truth* in Things, you will be obliged to own you have ſome Rule to diſcern *Truth* from Falſhood. For this Appearance or Signature of *Truth*, what is it elſe but a Diſtinction of *Truth* from Falſhood? So that if I bring you to confeſs, there is ſome Rule of diſtinguiſhing *Truth* from Falſhood, there is an open Acceſs to *Truth*.

See what follows from hence: when you find an Appearance of *Truth* in any Thing, which gives you Room to ſay that Thing is likely and probable, you comprehend and perceive it to be ſo: affirm afterwards what you comprehended and perceived, ſo as to purſue the ſame in the Uſe of Life, and by Conſequence

ſequence give your Aſſent and Belief to it. And when you ſay there are certain Things which are likely, but have Nothing of *Truth* in them, and that all is uncertain, you pronounce that is a *Truth:* for if you give it as a Falſity, we abide there, and have no Need of another Anſwer.

Why then do you maintain that Nothing is to be known? Nothing to be affirmed, ſince it is viſible that you comprehend and affirm this? So theſe Doubts and Obſcurities vaniſh, the Foundations of *Science* firmly ſtand, and all the Subtilties of the *Academicks* and *Scepticks* fall to the Ground.

## CHAP. IV.

### *The fourth Objection, that our Manner of Philoſophizing makes no Sect.*

'TIS a great Reproach to your Manner of Philoſophizing, that it makes no Body, nor true Syſtem of Doctrine; for being looſe, vague, uncertain, unfixed, without *Principles*, an Enemy to all other Sects, can it aſſume

the Title of a Sect, which it refuſes to all other?

## CHAP. V.

*Fifth Objection, that when we ſay Nothing is true nor falſe, and that there is no Demonſtration, we condemn our ſelves.*

MOreover you that lay Wait for all other *Philoſophers*, intangle your ſelves in your own Snares, from which you cannot be extricated by all the Art in the World. For when you ſay there is Nothing true nor falſe to be comprehended by human Wit; either that is true, or falſe. If it be true, ſomewhat then is true, and therefore you are deceived when you ſay that there is Nothing true nor falſe. If it be falſe, you are deceived ſtill, by advancing a Thing which is falſe. You fling your ſelves into the ſame Perplexity, by ſaying there is no *Demonſtration*. For either the Arguments you bring to prove it, do ſo, or not. If they do prove it, ſince to prove by Arguments is to demonſtrate, you muſt own that there are *Demon-*

*Demonſtrations.* If they do not prove it, ſince you vainly undertake to ſhew there are no *Demonſtrations*, you will be forced to acknowledge there are *Demonſtrations.*

## CHAP. VI.

*Sixth Objection, that we can ſcarcely doubt without Impiety, if God has not made Man in ſuch Sort as to be always deceived.*

BEhold another Battery raiſed againſt you. If *God* made Man ſo as to be always deceived even in Things which appear to him moſt evident, as *Des-Cartes* has propoſed, it will follow that *God* muſt be a Deceiver; which no Man fearing *God*, and in his right Senſes, will ever ſay; much leſs a Man of your Underſtanding. For *God* is (*a*) *full of Truth; he is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; he enlightens every Man that comes into the World*; ſo far is he from forming Man ſo as to be always deceived.

(*a*) Joh. i. 14. & xiv. 6. & i. 9.

CHAP.

## CHAP. VII.

*Seventh Objection, that this Law of doubting ſeems to hinder Submiſſion to Faith, and to favour the Corruption of Manners.*

IN ſhort; this Method of doubting, Suſpenſion of Judgment, and withholding Aſſent; this Method, I ſay, which you believe ſo proper to ſubject our Minds to *Faith*, ſeems to me on the contrary to withhold them from it. For what is more repugnant to ſuch Submiſſion, than not to give Credit to Things moſt evident? Will he whoſe Mind is habituated by long Exerciſe, to reſiſt the Teſtimony of Senſe, and the Force of Reaſon, willingly ſubmit to the *Myſteries* of *Faith*, which are obſcure in their Nature, and borrow no Aſſiſtance from the Senſes, nor Reaſon?

*Tertullian* (*a*) ſpoke of this with great Wiſdom: *What doſt thou mean, raſh*

(*a*) Tertull. de Anim. Cap. 7.

*Acade*

*Academick, thou doſt overthrow the whole State of Life; diſturb the whole Order of Nature; render the Providence of God blind, who to make his Works intelligible, uſeful; and to diſpenſe and give us the Enjoyment of them, has made all (if what thou ſayeſt be admitted) depend on Senſes, which are Impoſtors and Lyars.* He ſays moreover; *we are not allowed even to doubt of the Fidelity of the Senſes, leſt we doubt likewiſe of what has Reſpect to Chriſt, and ſay perhaps that he did not truly and really ſee Satan fall from Heaven, or not truly hear the Voice of the Father's Teſtimony from thence.* St. *Auguſtine* (*b*) ſpoke with no leſs Wiſdom, in ſaying: *if you take away Aſſent, you take away Faith; becauſe we believe Nothing without Aſſent.* And ſpeaking in another Place of the *Academicks*, to whom all Things were uncertain: *The City of God*, ſays he, *deteſts ſuch a Method of doubting, as an Extravagance, having Knowledge of Things comprehended by the Underſtanding and Reaſon, which is called Science, ſmall it is true (becauſe the Body*

(*b*) Auguſtin. Enchirid. ad Laurent. Cap. 20. & de Civit. Dei lib. xix. Cap. 18.

*weighs*

*weighs down the Soul) but notwithſtanding very certain: as the Apoſtle ſays, we know in Part; and the City of God yields Faith to the Senſes, in the Evidence of every Thing which the Underſtanding makes Uſe of by the Information of the Body: and thoſe who do not believe we muſt ever truſt to them, deceive themſelves in a much more pitiable Manner.*

It was certainly with much Juſtice, that the Fathers of the Church took upon them the Defence of Reaſon againſt the *Academicks*. For if we will not hearken to Reaſon, this Foundation, *that there is a God*, on which Reaſon bottoms the Chriſtian Religion, will be deſtroyed. Theſe firſt Principles known to us by natural Light, and on which *Faith* depends, will become uncertain; *viz.* one and the ſame Thing cannot Be, and Not be at the ſame Time; neither can a Thing be at one and the ſame Time, that, and another; the ſame Propoſition cannot at once be true and falſe, believed and not believed.

All *Theological* Concluſions will be likewiſe uncertain, if the two Propoſitions from whence they are drawn, are not certain with divine Certainty: For

if one of the two is not certain but of human Certainty, and known only by the Light of Nature, the Concluſion which according to the Doctrine of the Schools, always follows the weakeſt of two Propoſitions, will not, be certain but with human Certainty. Let us, for Example, take this Concluſion: *Jeſus Chriſt* is a rational Animal, which is deduced from theſe two Propoſitions, every Man is a rational Animal, *Jeſus Chriſt* is a Man. The firſt of theſe Propoſitions is not certain but by human Certainty. The laſt by divine.

The Motives of Credibility, which propoſe to us the *Myſteries* of *Faith* as credible, will likewiſe loſe their Force and Efficacy: for if they appear not credible to the Mind with Certainty and Evidence, but only with Probability, the Will will be carried towards a Thing unknown, and the Underſtanding believe with Imprudence, and not without ſome Apprehenſion of Error. *Faith* being thus unſettled, will be followed by Corruption of Manners: For whoever ſhall believe there is Nothing true nor falſe, will likewiſe think there is Nothing good nor evil. And this is what the *Scepticks* have not been aſhamed to ſay. How can a Mind prepoſſeſſed

ſed with ſuch an Error refrain from Licentiouſneſs? And theſe were perhaps the principal Reaſons, which obliged the *Chriſtians* abſolutely to reject the Sect of *Pyrrhonians*; as being deſtructive to *Faith*, and an Enemy to good Manners. This alſo obliged the great Defender of *Truth* and *Piety*, St. *Auguſtine*, whoſe Teſtimony has been lately cited, to oppoſe the *Academicks* when a *Chriſtian*, whoſe Sentiments he embraced being a *Pagan*. You are now to extricate your ſelf out of all theſe Difficulties, which to me ſeem not to be eaſily ſolved.

## CHAP. VIII.

### *The Objections of our Adverſaries anſwered.*

FOR my Part, ſaid our *Provincial*, I find not theſe Difficulties to be of ſo much Perplexity, as they appear to you. But before I undertake to anſwer, you muſt know that it is one of the Advantages our *Philoſophy* has above all other, to be ſtrongly guarded by Objections, which deſtroy the reſt. For this

this ſhews the Obſcurity of Things, the Weakneſs of Men's Judgment, and the equal Weight of contrary Reaſons: ſince even what we propoſe with Heſitation and Uncertainty, is not out of the Reach of Contradiction, in ſo much that we cannot know, nor be ignorant of any Thing with Aſſurance.

You muſt underſtand likewiſe, that you are not to hope for more from your Objections, than thoſe who having attacked the *Academicks*, and *Scepticks*, by infinite Diſputes, at laſt acknowledged, they gained Nothing by it. For we learn from *Plutarch* (*a*), that this Doctrine, after it had been vigorouſly oppoſed by excellent *Philoſophers* and infinite Volumes, was not diſcouraged, and ſtood its Ground. That you may experience the ſame your ſelf, your Objections muſt be examined.

(*a*) Plutarch. contr. Colot.

CHAP.

## CHAP. IX.

### *Anſwer to the firſt Objection.*

YOU ſay in the firſt Place we de prive Man of his Senſes, draw Vail over his Underſtanding, confoun *Truth* and Falſhood, and therefore ſub vert the whole Uſe of Life. This is a antiquated and threadbare Complaint and has been often refuted by the an cient *Academicks* and *Scepticks*, wh anſwered, as I have already informe you, that it is one Thing to live, and ther to *Philoſophize*.

In the Conduct of Life, and the Di charge of our Duties, we ceaſe to b *Philoſophers*, to contradict, to be du bious and uncertain; we are eaſy, ſim ple, credulous; call Things by the Names: Look to our Morals, and chec our Underſtanding; conform to th Manners, Cuſtoms, and Laws of Me I who doubt ſometimes whether I an whether there are any other Men, b niſh all theſe Thoughts at preſent; an

as being aſſured that I am, and that other Men are, I eat, drink, walk, viſit, ſalute, entertain my Friends, affirm, deny, aſſure that this is true, and that falſe. For, as *Cicero* ſays, *(a) There is a great Difference between the Subtilty with which we ſeek Truth in Diſpute; and that whereby we adjuſt our Diſcourſe to the common Opinion.*

But you will ſay to me, this makes againſt yourſelf; and that you are convinced by your own Experience, and the Uſe of the Certainty of Things whereof you doubted; and this Neceſſity reduces you from your Errors, and puts you in the right Way. But is it not common and cuſtomary, to make Uſe of ſeveral Things, and enjoy them as true, although we know very well they are dubious, or even abſolutely falſe?

Aſtronomers have invented certain Deſcriptions of celeſtial Orbs, by them called *Syſtems*, and *Hypotheſes*. Which they don't believe themſelves, nor propoſe to others as true, and indeed cannot all be ſo: The *Hypotheſis* of *Copernicus* is different from that of *Tycho*; and one deſtructive of the other. Each

(a) Ciceron. Offic. libr. ii.

of them notwithſtanding uſefully employs his own *Hypotheſis*, to explain the Motion of the Stars, and predict *Eclipſes* of the Sun, and Moon. It is falſe to ſay the Earth is but a Point; and notwithſtanding in the Uſe of Aſtronomy, and Projection of ſolar Quadrants, it is ſuppoſed as certain.

In what is called *Analyſis*, we uſually ſuppoſe that which we ſeek, and is unknown to us, as true and well known; and thereby come to the Diſcovery of the Thing ſought for. How many provide againſt the Time of Age, to which they are not ſure they ſhall ever arrive? A Traveller who is ignorant of the Road he is to take, does not for that Reaſon ſtand ſtock ſtill in a croſs Way, and go no further.

## CHAP. X.

### *Anſwer to the ſecond Objection.*

BY your ſecond Objection, you pretend that I extinguiſh the Light of *Science*, and in its Place ſubſtitute the Darkneſs of Ignorance. Have you Nothing

thing elſe to ſay, but what has been objected a hundred Times over? I expected ſomewhat more new and refined. Againſt this ſuperannuated Argument, I ſhall offer an Anſwer not invalid, given already, *viz.* that without any Reaſon you impute a Fault of *Nature* to us, if it be allowable to ſay *Nature* is capable of a Fault.

He who pronounced Man to be a Bubble, is he the Cauſe of Man's being a Bubble? If I ſay Man cannot look on the Sun, am I accountable for the Weakneſs of his Eyes? Hear *Seneca (a): Truth lies profoundly hid, and we cannot complain of any Malignity of Nature, becauſe Nothing is difficult to be diſcovered, but Things whoſe Diſcovery is of no other Advantage. All that can render us better and happier, is placed before, or near us, by Nature.* 'Tis without Reaſon then, that *Seneca* (*b*) in another place complains of the *Philoſophy* which teaches to doubt, as not affording any Light to guide our Underſtanding to *Truth*, but even as putting out its own Eyes.

(*a*) Senec. de Benef. libr. vii. Cap. i. (*b*) Senec. 88.

I anſwer; this *Philoſophy* puts not out its own Eyes; but diſcovers your Blindneſs, who think your ſelves to be exceedingly clear-ſighted. As he who ſays a Mole has no Eyes, does not put out the Mole's Eyes. If you are ſo well pleaſed with your vain Opinion, love to be flattered, and to ſeem to know what you do not, enjoy your Error; but give us Leave to be ignorant of what we are ignorant. For that Reaſon, we are not the more remiſs in the Study of Knowledge; ſhall ſpare no Labour for good Learning: and while you cultivate the *Sciences* in a vain Hope of knowing *Truth*; we on the other Hand ſhall do ſo, to find what is moſt probable and moſt likely to be true.

Will you accuſe of Lazineſs and Ignorance, thoſe many excellent *Philoſophers*, we have oppoſed to ſo great Number of *Dogmatiſts?*

Certainly to do them Juſtice, we muſt acknowledge they were the Authors and Princes of the greateſt Part of *Science* and fine Arts. It was not for Fear of running into Ignorance, that empty *Philoſophers* rejected the Sect of *Arceſilas*, *Carneades*, and *Pyrrho*; but for being compelled to acknowledge their own. Add to this, that adhering to

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Sect, and following Probability only, we are obliged to weigh the Arguments of oppoſite Sides, as the *Academicks* did: Which cannot be done without much Study and Learning. The *Dogmatiſts* on the contrary wholly apply themſelves to know the Nature, Conſtitution, and Arguments of that Sect they embrace, without troubling themſelves any further. This is what the greateſt Part of the Profeſſors of the Doctrine of *Ariſtotle* practiſe at this Day.

Having learned the Method of *Philoſophy* taught in the Schools, and reduced it to Precepts proportionable to the Capacity of their Diſciples, little concern themſelves with what *Plato*, *Epicurus*, and *Zeno* thought. Do not give themſelves even the Trouble of reading *Ariſtotle*; know not whether the Doctrine of the *Peripateticks* they profeſs, is truly that Doctrine or no. *Epicurus* himſelf ſatisfied with eſpouſing the Principles of *Democritus*, deſpiſed not ſo many other *Sciences* he ſeemed to deſpiſe, but to hide his Ignorance; pretending they were uſeleſs for the Attainment of true Knowledge: although *Nauſiphanes* in the mean Time who taught him his *Philoſophy*, and had

been a Diſciple of *Pyrrho*, was a very learned Man. And at length many *Academicks* and *Scepticks* arrived to a high Pitch of Erudition.

As for *Des-Cartes*, although he carefully ſtudied the ancient *Philoſophers*, and many of the modern, affected to appear as if he knew Nothing of them, to be thought the only Inventor of his Doctrine. In which Conduct, many of his Diſciples followed him too cloſely; for they imitated his feigned, by real Ignorance. In the mean while theſe Defenders of Ignorance, theſe Enemies of Learning, which appears but too much by their Writings, ceaſe not continually to repeat the ſame Objection againſt the *Academicks*, and to accuſe them of profound Ignorance: Becauſe, ſay they, by this Profeſſion of knowing Nothing, they acknowledge themſelves to be the moſt ignorant of all Men. As if in ſaying they knew Nothing, they owned that others knew more than they.

But theſe *Philoſophers* of ſo much Circumſpection, who in all their Works recommend it to us, ſhould have been ſo attentive themſelves, as to ſee that the Word *to know* is *equivocal*, and

is one Thing to know with entire Evidence and perfect Certainty, another probably; that the *Academicks* perceive Things in this latter Manner, as all other Men do; but no-body in the former. They pretended that the *Academicks* affected to appear doubtful of all Things, and even of the most certain, to gain the publick Reputation of Men of Wit It was to appear Men of Wit then, that the *Carteſians* and *Des-Cartes* before them, would have us in Order to know *Truth*, diſengage our Minds from the Opinions they are prepoſſeſſed with, and which they call *Prejudices*. But it is eaſy to perceive both by this Reproach and all the reſt, that they have not any Tincture of polite Learning, and indeed never knew the Sentiments of *Academicks* and *Scepticks*.

## CHAP. XI.

### *Anſwer to the third Objection.*

WE proceed to your third Objection, which is to make us believe we ſee what we do not, I would ſay

*Truth* from Falſhood, by certain *Signs* that diſtinguiſh one from the other. It is really ſurprizing enough that you ſhould know what I ſee, and I ſhould not know it myſelf. There is an Appearance of *Truth* found in Things which we hold to. You infer from thence, that we have a *Rule* of diſcerning between *Truth* and *Falſhood*, viz. this Appearance. But Appearance of *Truth* is no certain Indication of *Truth*, it is only a Thing external, and when perceived in ſome *Object*, we don't ſay *Truth* is there, becauſe this Appearance is not always exempt from Falſity; only pronounce that Likelihood and Probability is there.

*Zeuxis* ſeeing a Curtain painted in a Piece of *Parrhaſius*, deceived by the Likeneſs, believed it to be real; if after the Diſcovery of his Error, he had beheld a true Curtain drawn over the Piece, he would have doubted the *Truth* of that alſo, and believed it to be only an Appearance whether true or falſe, 'till he had examined the Matter a little nearer. So we having frequently been deceived by the Fallacy which is in Things, ought to conclude, if we are wiſe, that Probability is there, but not *Truth*; and that ſuch Probability might ariſe from *Truth* or Falſhood. This Appearance

pearance then, is ſo far from being a *Rule* to diſtinguiſh the one from the other, ſince we have experienced it to be common to both, that we reſolve for the future, to abſtain from thinking to diſcern *Truth* from Falſhood, and from yielding our Belief and Aſſent to either.

But, ſay you, to perceive this Likelihood, we muſt have known the *Truth* before. For I cannot tell whether the Picture of *Peter* reſembles *Peter*, if *Peter* was not known to me before. Now the Knowledge we have both of *Truth*, and of *Peter*, are equally uncertain: For we have not this Knowledge but by *Ideas*; and I have ſhewed you all along, that they are very uncertain Characters of the *Veracity* of Things. And becauſe we have no Rule of *Truth*, to which we may apply our *Ideas*, the *Idea* of *Peter* which proceeded from *Peter*, is as uncertain, as that *Idea* I have formed of *Truth*; and I am no more aſſured of the Certainty of the one, than the other. Accordingly when I ſay that the Image of *Peter* is like *Peter*, that ſignifies the *Idea* I have of *Peter*'s Image, ſeems to me to reſemble the *Idea* I have of *Peter*; ſo when I ſay the Appearance of *Truth* I find in an *Object*

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is likely, or like to *Truth*, I mean the *Idea* I have of that Appearance, ſeems to me to be like the *Idea* I have of *Truth*.

As to what you add, that if we know not *Truth*, we know Likelihood at leaſt; becauſe when we declare an Appearance of *Truth* is found in ſuch and ſuch a Thing, we know, and affirm it is ſo; and when we follow that Appearance or Reſemblance of *Truth*, we give our Aſſent thereto; and therefore have no Reaſon to ſay that Man cannot comprehend, and ought not to affirm, nor believe any Thing: this is eaſily anſwered. For when I own I diſcover an Appearance of *Truth* in any Thing, I mean I have two *Ideas* imprinted in my Mind; namely the *Idea* of the Appearance of *Truth*, and the *Idea* of *Truth* it ſelf, which being compared appear to me to be alike. As when I ſee *Peter*, the *Idea* of *Peter* comes immediately into my Mind: and becauſe I cannot compare the *Idea* of *Peter* with *Peter* himſelf, ſince *Peter* is not in my Mind, but only the *Idea* of him; the Origin of this *Idea* is entirely uncertain as well as its Reſemblance of the Thing it repreſents; and by which I ſhall never know with Certainty and Evidence that *Peter* is there preſent. Neverthe-

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eſs this ſeems to me to be probable, ecauſe on other Occaſions, reſembling *Ideas* have appeared to me to ſignify a Conformity, or Correſpondence between hem and the Things themſelves.

Now *Truth* being Nothing elſe, as I ave ſaid, but the Relation and Agreement of the external *Object* with the udgment of the Underſtanding, in iew of the *Idea* proceeding from hat *Object:* So Probability is Nothing lſe, but the Appearance of the Relaion and Agreement of the external *Object*, with the Judgment which my Underſtanding forms in View of that *Idea.* When I apply my Underſtanding hen to conſider the *Idea* I have of *Peter*, methinks I perceive therein a ertain Appearance of Relation, and Agreement with *Peter.* Afterwards I ompare the *Idea* of that Appearance, with the *Idea* of *Peter*, and finding hem to be alike, I conclude this Apearnce is probable.

Then you'll ſay, we know at leaſt that hoſe *Ideas* are alike. No; for to *know*, s to know moſt ſurely and moſt evilently. But I do not know all the *Ideas* have in my Underſtanding. Many ouches, many Traces are formed there without

without my Privity, or thinking of them; a great Quantity of Spirits are convey'd to my Brain, a great Quantity retire from it; they are agitated in different Manners. From thence it is, that whether I will or no, I both retain, and forget an Infinity of Things; do not always perceive in me the ſame Strength of Wit and Apprehenſion; my Reaſon does not at all Times ſerve me alike, and by Conſequence am not Maſter of the *Ideas* of Things, nor ſufficiently inſtructed in the Nature of *Ideas*, their Cauſes, Origin, and Extinction; which hinders my knowing their Reſemblances with full Aſſurance. Now I cannot aſſure with Certainty, what I know with no Certainty.

I believe I have effectually proved the Fidelity of the Brain to be dubious, and that we comprehend not the Nature of our Underſtanding. But there are Images in the Brain, namely thoſe Traces which are imprinted in it by the Motion of the Spirits, and Nerves. From whence the Underſtanding forms *Ideas*, compares them one with another, and diſcovers the Reſemblances that are between them. What certain and indubitable Knowledge then can I draw from Inſtruments of ſuch doubtful Credit?

dit? What can I affirm, without ſure and conſtant Perception? When an *Academick* then ſays there is no *Truth*, that all is uncertain, and we know Nothing, he advances not theſe Propoſitions affirmatively, but narratively. And here the Exception of *Carneades*, and the *Scepticks*, which I have already alledged, ought to take Place, namely, that theſe Propoſitions include themſelves; and when any one ſays we can know Nothing, he does not except even what he ſays, and in deſtroying the Knowledge of all other, he deſtroys his own: like *Sampſon* when he involved himſelf in the ſame Ruin which cruſhed all his Spectators.

The Objection of *Ariſtocles* (*a*) does not affect us, when he ſays that if theſe Propoſitions, by which we deſtroy other, are uncertain, and deſtroy themſelves, it is to no Purpoſe to uſe them, for they prove Nothing. I anſwer they are to Purpoſe, and we uſe them not in vain, if they do deſtroy other Propoſitions by deſtroying themſelves: for it is purely for this End we employ them, and not to eſtabliſh and ſupport them.

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(*a*) Ariſtocl. apud Euſeb. Præf. libr. xiv. Cap. 18.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XII.

### *Anſwer to the fourth Objection.*

WE are not much concerned, that you refuſe our Doctrine the Title of Sect, and of *Philoſophy*; for provided the Thing be manifeſt, we ſhall not trouble our ſelves with Names. Call it not a Sect, but the Gleanings of all Sects; call it (*a*) *the Philoſophy of not philoſophizing*, as ſome have done, and you have my Conſent. We ſhould uſurp the Title of Sect with a very ill Grace, which we refuſe to others, ſince we know *Truth* no better than they, whoſe Ignorance makes us refuſe them this Title.

We readily grant that *Arceſilas* is ſtab'd by the ſame Weapon, with which he wounds all other *Philoſophers*, as *Lactantius* (*b*) objects to him. The *Dogmatick* and *Aporetick*, i. e. both the affirmative *Philoſophy*, and that which teaches to doubt, are liable to the ſame

(*a*) Lactant. libr. iii. Cap. 5. (*b*) Lactant. libr. iii. Cap. 5.

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Fate. But we have this Advantage a-
bove them, *viz.* they know not that
hey know Nothing, and we do know
t, although uncertainly and dubiouſly.
Moreover they diſpute not the Likeli-
hood we follow; and we deny them the
*Truth* which they ſeek.

Since our Views then go farther than
heirs, and we have our own and their
uffrage too, we better deſerve that il-
uſtrious Name of *Philoſophers*, and have
nore right to the Title of Sect than
ney. Beſides, they are ſubject to be
eceived, which is unworthy of Perſons
ho call themſelves *Philoſophers:* but
e who affirm Nothing, and ſuſpend
ur Judgment in all, while we remain
this State, are not, neither can be
eceived.

Which then will merit the Name of
ect, their Doctrine or ours? Will uncer-
in Poſitions taken for true, and Con-
quences drawn from them which
ave no more *Truth*, placed in Order
a *Syſtem*, and maintained and adhe-
d to with Obſtinacy; or that which
mbracing no Opinions, neither affirm-
g nor denying, is ſatisfied to propoſe
hat appears to be probable, gives for
ikelihood what is Likelihood, and
rms it into a Kind of Connexion? Who
e beſt and ſafeſt lodged, thoſe who

ſhould

ſhould build a lofty Houſe of weak and almoſt broken Reeds, and dwell in it? Or they who having experienced the Danger of ſuch Materials, and not finding any more ſolid, fearful of being buried under the Ruins of ſuch a Fabrick, ſhould chuſe a natural Cavern in the Bottom of a Rock for their Retreat, and there ſecurely ſtow their Goods and Proviſions?

Even theſe Probabilities which we follow, may be very well ranged in the Form, and compoſed of all the Parts of a *Syſtem*, and put in a Condition to defend itſelf againſt all the Attacks of the *Dogmatiſts*. Witneſs *Sextus Empiricus* who has left us an exact Deſcription of this modeſt Doctrine of the *Scepticks*, conſiſting of all its Parts, well compacted and united together. Time has conſumed many other Works which ſhewed what *Sextus* did.

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## CHAP. XIII.

### *The fifth Objection anſwered.*

WE ſhall eaſily deliver our ſelves likewiſe out of thoſe Snares you lay for us, and think to be inextricable, *viz.* when you reaſon thus: If when we maintain there is Nothing true nor falſe, we ſpeak Truth, it follows there is ſome *Truth*, and therefore we are deceived. If in ſaying there is Nothing true nor falſe, we do not ſpeak Truth, it follows we are deceived no leſs, in advancing what is falſe. This Argument is the ſame you have already objected to us, that when I ſay we can neither comprehend nor ſafely affirm any Thing, I comprehend and affirm that at leaſt. We muſt then recur to the former Anſwer; namely, that when I ſay there is Nothing true nor falſe, that Propoſition includes itſelf, and is not excepted from this general Law which pronounces, that there is Nothing true nor falſe.

You will ſee the Validity of this Argument better if it be reduced into Form. Thus then you object to us *Syllogiſtically*, viz. When we ſay there is Nothing true nor falſe, what we pronounce is true or falſe. If true, then we have aſſerted what is falſe, in ſaying Nothing is true nor falſe: if we aſſert what is falſe, in ſaying there is Nothing true nor falſe; this Propoſition which we have advanced is then falſe, *viz.* that there is Nothing true nor falſe. From whence it follows, that whether we have ſpoke what is true or falſe, by advancing this Propoſition that there is nothing true nor falſe, this Propoſition is certainly falſe.

In Anſwer to this, I don't agree to your *Major*, which is; when we ſay there is Nothing true nor falſe, in ſaying ſo, what we ſpeak is either true or falſe: Now this is a plain begging of the Queſtion, to uſe the Terms of *Logicians*; ſince you take the Thing which is in Queſtion for certain and granted, in ſuppoſing that there is no Propoſition which is not true or falſe; for we affirm that there is nothing true nor falſe; your Reaſoning then being bottomed on a Propoſition uncertain and dubious, the Concluſion you draw from it, is null and void

void. There is an Example of a like Argument in the Schools called *Aſyſtates*, that is to ſay, which cannot ſubſiſt. They ſuppoſe a Man has dreamt that he muſt not believe Dreams; and ſee how they reaſon on it; if this Man believes this Dream, he will at the ſame Time believe, and not believe in Dreams: He will believe in Dreams, ſince he believes in this Dream: he will not believe in Dreams, ſince he believes in the Dream which forbids him to believe in Dreams. But if this Man believes not this Dream, he will at the ſame Time ſtill believe, and not believe, in Dreams: he will believe in Dreams, ſince he will obey the Precept of this Dream, which forbids him to believe in Dreams; he will not believe in Dreams, ſince he believes not in the Dream which warns him not to believe in Dreams. Theſe Propoſitions ſeem to contradict and deſtroy each other; but the Solution is the ſame as that of the former: For this Dream depriving other Dreams of Belief, deprives it ſelf of Belief alſo. This Dreamer then will not refuſe his Belief to other Dreams, becauſe he believes this; but being only cautioned, and not convinced by it, he will hold all Dreams to be falſe, and this as well as the reſt.

We ſhall be at as little Trouble to refute what you have advanced as a Demonſtration. The Proofs, ſay you, which we bring to ſhew there is no ſuch Thing as Demonſtration, either prove or do not prove it: if they do prove it, then there are Demonſtrations, ſince a Proof made by Reaſon is a Demonſtration: if they do not prove it, then there are Demonſtrations, ſince the Proofs you have produced to ſhew that there is no Demonſtration, do not prove it.

In Anſwer to this Reaſoning, I ſay, you ſtill ſuppoſe as true and granted that which is in Diſpute; Namely, that all Argumentation, *i. e.* all Proofs which are made by Reaſon, either prove or do not prove. When I undertake to prove there is no Demonſtration, the Proof made uſe of comprehends it ſelf with all the other Proofs, and deſtroys its own Force. Then, you will ſay, if this Proof be vain, and of no Effect, it follows that there are Demonſtrations, because the Proof brought to ſhew that there are none, is invalid. I own it is not true, becauſe Nothing is conſtantly ſo: I own it concludes Nothing certainly, becauſe there is Nothing inconteſtably certain, I ſay it is only probable, and what is but probable, conclud-

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Nothing with Certainty; which Certainty is nevertheleſs neceſſary to a Demonſtration.

That other Argument the *Epicureans* object to us is a meer Jeſt, when they ſay we either know what Demonſtration is, or know it not; if we know it, it follows that there are Demonſtrations; if we know it not, we are very ill adviſed to make Oppoſition to a Thing of which we are utterly ignorant.

In anſwer to this, I ſay it proves too much; and therefore proves Nothing. It proves too much, becauſe it may be employed againſt all who deny that ſome particular Thing exiſts; as for Inſtance, againſt thoſe who ſhall ſay there is no *Hippogryphin*. For the *Epicureans* will anſwer them that they know what a *Hippogryphin* is, or do not know it: if they know it, by Conſequence there are *Hippogryphins*; if they do not know it, they are ill adviſed to oppoſe a Thing which we know not. There are neither Demonſtrations nor *Hippogryphins*, but we may form *Ideas* of Things that do not exiſt, and reaſon upon them as if they did.

## CHAP. XIV.

### *Anſwer to the ſixth Objection.*

YOU ſay next that if *God* has made us ſo, as to be always deceived even in Things which ſeem to be moſt clear, we ſhall be compelled to own that *God* is a Deceiver; which cannot be aſſerted nor thought, without the greateſt Impiety. To this Objection *Des-Cartes* ſhould anſwer, who was the Author of this Way of Reaſoning, which I have related without any Approbation: For our holy *Religion* teaches us otherwiſe. But imagine you are to talk with *Des-Cartes* on this Head: he will not fail to ſay, that if *God* has made us of ſuch a Nature as to be always deceived, we muſt not argue from thence he is, or was a Deceiver. For ſince he has created us ſo, as to be ſometimes deceived and in the mean Time we cannot therefore call him a Deceiver, we have no more Reaſon to call him ſo, if we ſhould always, and in every Thing be deceived.

More

Moreover, if *God* made us of ſuch a Nature as to be always deceived, that would not be ſufficient to authorize us to ſay *God* is a Deceiver; but to do ſo, it muſt be proved he has made us in ſuch ſort, that beſides being always deceived, we ſhould certainly believe we are not always deceived. As we cannot accuſe him of being a Liar who recites Fables, but the Teller of Stories, who would perſwade the Hearers he ſpeaks Truth. As we cannot accuſe a Man of being a Cheat, who ſells a Houſe built of rotten and ruinous Materials, but one who ſelling a Tenement in a wretched Condition, ſhould aſſure it to be ſound and firm. On the Contrary, we ſhall eſteem his Honeſty, who in ſelling this Houſe diſcovered its Faults.

Such is *God*'s Conduct towards Men. He has given us to underſtand, that our Senſes are faithleſs, our Reaſon deceitful, our Underſtanding weak, our Perceptions obſcure and uncertain. Has informed us of this by the *Oracles* of his Word, as I have ſhewed; by the very Nature of our Senſes, Reaſon, and Experience. For finding we are frequently deceived we ſhould think we may be deved always, or if it happens ſometimes we are not deceived, for ought we know we are deceived then. Wherein God

informs us he is *full of Truth*, and *Truth* itſelf, that we are ſubject to Error, and often do err, ſolliciting us by internal and continual Exhortations not to look for certain Knowledge of *Truth*, from the Senſes and Reaſon, but from him by *Faith*.

But farther, it is more to our Advantage to be deprived of the Knowledge of *Truth*, than to have an open and eaſy Acceſs to it: For being well apprized, that we cannot know *Truth* with intire Certainty, and perfect Evidence, we muſt ſuſpend our Judgment, and ſo be never deceived. Thus *Des-Cartes* may defend himſelf againſt your Attack. But that is his Buſineſs: We are not anſwerable for theſe Opinions.

## CHAP. XV.

### *Anſwer to the ſeventh Objection.*

YOU conclude with this important Objection, that by ſuſpending our Judgment and Aſſent, we deviate from the Submiſſion due to *Faith*, and give an Inlet to Corruption of Manners. Now we

we are not deſtitute of Means to reconcile *Faith* and Reaſon, and the former has Nothing to fear from the latter: For Reaſon has its Light, though weak and obſcure; but can derive from that Light no more than from the Senſes and Nature, all Aſſiſtances neceſſary to acquire a ſure and conſummate Knowledge of *Truth*. For as to thoſe Notices we have from the divine Light, which illuminates our Underſtanding above the Laws of Nature, we ought to ſubmit to it without Reluctancy. And having received the *Faith*, are obliged to regulate our Morals according to its Precepts. But without this holy Rule, we have Laws and Cuſtoms, which may ſerve us for the Conduct of Life.

As to that warm Expreſſion of *Tertullian* (*a*) in Favour of the Senſes, that by neglecting their Teſtimony, we ſubvert the State of Life, diſturb the Oeconomy of Nature, and put out the Eyes of God's Providence: Theſe are old Complaints of the *Dogmatiſts* to which I have ſufficiently anſwered, by all that has been lately ſaid: And doubtleſs he ought not to have drawn his Proof from the Humanity of *Jeſus Chriſt*, which

(*a*) Tertull. de Anim. Cap. 7.

was

was joined to the Divinity, and no leſs exempt from Error than Sin. As to the *Apoſtles*, and other Saints, whoſe Words and Actions concurred to the Propagation of the *Faith*, *God* preſerved in them all the Fidelity, and Certainty of Reaſon, and Senſes, that human Nature is capable of; and defended them from Error by the Aſſiſtance of his *Grace*.

I own with *Saint Auguſtine* (*a*), that without Aſſent there is no *Faith*: But the Aſſent which *Faith* requires, differs in Kind, from what is required by Reaſon. He baniſhes Doubt from the *City* of *God*, and juſtly; if thoſe Doubts intermeddle with, and make an Attempt on Things of Faith. He affirms we may acquire the moſt certain *Science* by Reaſon: I own it, but this *Science* will be moſt certain no farther than human Certainty extends, and *Saint Auguſtine* acknowledges that this human Certainty is weak and imperfect; that human Underſtanding plunged in the Pollution of the Fleſh, and involved in the Darkneſs of Ignorance, ſees but obſcurely and cannot look upon the Light of *Truth*. Let us paſs to your other Objections.

(*a*) Auguſtin. Enchir. ad Laurent. Cap. 20. & de Civit. Dei. lib. xix. Cap. 18.

If we hearken not to Reaſon, ſay you, you overthrow that great Foundation of Religion, which Reaſon has eſtabliſhed in our Underſtanding, viz. *God is.* To anſwer this Objection, you muſt be told that Men know *God* in two Manners. By Reaſon, with entire human Certainty: and by *Faith*, with abſolute and divine Certainty. Although by Reaſon we cannot acquire any Knowledge more certain than that of the *Being* of *God*; inſomuch that all the Arguments, which the Impious oppoſe to this Knowledge are of no Validity, and eaſily refuted, nevertheleſs this Certainty is not abſolutely perfect.

For whence it was that the *Fathers* of the *Church* would hardly believe, that he could know *God* who knew him by Reaſon only, and not by *Faith*; and accounted that Knowledge of *God* which we have by Reaſon, almoſt as Nothing. For what do theſe Words of *Tertullian* (*a*) which I have already cited, ſignify: *To whom is God known without Chriſt? To whom is the holy Spirit given without the Sacrament of Faith?* What does St. *Athanaſius* mean, (*b*) when he teaches us that the *Being* of a *Divinity* is not proved by Ratio-

(*a*) Tertull. De Anim. Cap. 2. (*b*) Athanaſ. ad Serapion.

cination,

cination, but by the Help of *Faith* and holy Meditations, which are conceived by Piety? How is St. *Chryſoſtome* to be underſtood, (*c*) when he laughs at *Philoſophers* who would not believe the World was made of Nothing, and yet readily granted that *God* had no Beginning, and was not begotten, though the former be much leſs credible, and we know neither one nor the other by Reaſon, but by *Faith?*

What Anſwer would you make to *Peter* of *Ailly*, (*d*) when he ſpeaks thus: *Although this Propoſition, God is, may be inevident, and cannot be demonſtrated evidently, it is nevertheleſs naturally probable.* Witneſs the Teſtimony alledged by *Gabriel Biel*, (*e*) when he declares that *we know ſufficiently, though not evidently, that there muſt be a firſt Being, Author of Preſervation, as there is a firſt Being, Author of Production.* What does St. *Thomas* ſay (*f*) when he argues thus: *Human Reaſon is very defective in human Things. And what ſhews it, is, that Philoſophers who following Nature, applied themſelves to the Search of ſuch Things, have been*

(*c*) Chryſoſt. Hom. 22. in Epiſt. ad. Ebr. (*d*) Petr. de Alliaco in 1. Quæſt. 3. Lit. x. (*e*) Biel. in 1. Diſt. 2. Quæſt. 10. Art. 3. Dub. 1. (*f*) Thom. 2. 2. Q. 2. A. 4.

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*frequently deceived, and contradicted each other. To the Intent then that Men might have a certain and undoubted Knowledge of God, it was neceſſary Things divine ſhould be taught them as Articles of Faith, and the Words of a God who cannot lie.*

Now although to prove the *Exiſtance* of the *Deity*, we can bring Arguments which accumulated and connected together, are not of leſs Power to convince Men than Geometrical Principles, and Theorems deduced from them, and which are of entire human Certainty; notwithſtanding becauſe learned *Philoſophers* have openly oppoſed even theſe Principles, 'tis clear we cannot neither in the natural Knowledge we have of *God*, which is acquired by Reaſon, nor in *Science* founded on Geometrical Principles, and Theorems, find abſolute and conſummate Certainty; but only that human Certainty I have ſpoke of, to which nevertheleſs every wiſe Man ought to ſubmit his Underſtanding. This being not repugnant to the Teſtimony of the Book of *Wiſdom* (*g*), and the Epiſtle (*h*) to the *Romans*, which declares that Men

(*g*) Sap. xiii. & ſeq. (*h*) Rom. i. 20.

who

who do not from the Make of the World acknowledge the Power and Divinity of the *Maker*, are ſenſeleſs and inexcuſable.

For to uſe the Terms of *Vaſquez*: (*i*) *By theſe Words the holy Scripture means only, that there has ever been a ſufficient Teſtimony of the Being of a God in the Fabrick of the World, and in his other Works, to make him known unto Men: but the Scripture is not under any Concern whether this Knowledge be evident, or of greateſt Probability: for theſe Terms*, are ſeen *and* underſtood, *in their common and uſual Acceptation, ſignify all the Knowledge of the Mind with a determined Aſſent.* He adds after: *For if any one ſhould at this Time deny Chriſt, that which would render him inexcuſable, would not be becauſe he might have had an evident Knowledge and Reaſon for believing in him, but becauſe he might have believed it by Faith, and a prudential Knowledge.*

'Tis with Reaſon then that *Suarez*, (*k*) teaches, that *the natural Evidence*

(*i*) Vaſq. in Thom. 1 Part. Sect. 6.

(*k*) Suar. Diſp. iii. de Fid

*of this Principle, God is the firſt Truth, who cannot be deceived, is not neceſſary, nor ſufficient enough to make us believe by infuſed Faith, what God reveals.* He proves by the Teſtimony of Experience, that it is not neceſſary; for ignorant and illiterate Chriſtians, although they know Nothing clearly and certainly of *God*, do believe nevertheleſs that *God is*. Even Chriſtians of Parts and Learning, as St. *Thomas* (*l*) has obſerved, believe that *God is*, before they know it by Reaſon. *Suarez* hews afterwards, that the natural Evidence of this Principle is not ſufficient, becauſe divine *Faith* which is infuſed into our Underſtanding, cannot e bottomed upon human *Faith* alone, ow clear and firm ſoever it is, as upon formal *Object*, becauſe an Aſſent moſt rm, and of an Order moſt noble and exted, cannot derive its Certainty from more infirm Aſſent.

St. *Thomas* (*m*) and other Divines e of the ſame Opinion, not only ouching Theological Virtues, but mol no leſs, infuſed of *God*, which canot be directed according to their Dig-

(*l*) Thom. 2. 2. Q. 2. A. 4, & 5. (*m*) Thom. 2. 2. 2. A. 4. &. 1. 2. Q. 63. A. 3. A. 3. in Corp. & ad um.

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nity by natural Reaſon. We are not to imagine this is deſtroyed by that Sentence of St. *Paul*; (*n*) *He that cometh to God, muſt believe that he is:* believe it, not by natural *Faith*, but by *Faith* infuſed of *God:* for immediately before he ſays, *without Faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God.* Thus the Fathers of the *Council* of *Trent* explained it (*o*): As to that Propoſition of St. *Thomas*, *we believe God, or the Being of God, and in God by one and the ſame Act*, it teaches us that the divine *Faith* by which we believe that God is, comes from God himſelf, and not from Nature and human Reaſon: *For, as* Suarez *ſays the Excellence of the firſt Truth deſerves that when the material Object is reſolved into the formal, this ſame formal Object is not reſolved into another, but believed by itſelf*, becauſe *it can give Teſtimony of itſelf.*

As to what you have added, that in the Event, *Faith* will depend on Things uncertain, if firſt Principles which are known by the Light of Nature are uncertain; as this for Inſtance, one and the ſame Thing cannot Be, and Not be

(*n*) Ebr. xi. 6. (*o*) Concil. Trid. Seſs. vi. Cap. 6.

at the ſame Time, *Suarez* (*a*) has given an excellent Anſwer to it: *If ſome firſt Principle be found neceſſarily involved in the Aſſent of Faith, it will be believed alſo by Faith, and Faith depends not on this Principle as naturally known. For Example, If I believe God in a Trinity of Perſons, I neceſſarily believe he is not one in Perſon, and that he has not four Perſons: not becauſe of this natural Principle, every Thing is, or not, ſo far as it is natural: but becauſe Faith itſelf, which makes it be believed that the Affirmation is true, makes it be believed that the Negative is falſe. And ſo of the like.*

*Faith* depends not on theſe firſt Principles, but ſuppoſes them, as certain, in that ſupreme human Certainty I have mentioned; joining itſelf to which, of certain they were by ſupreme human Certainty, they become ſo by divine Certainty: as I have proved ſeemingly to your Satisfaction. From whence you might eaſily know, that while human Underſtanding truſting to Reaſon, bottoms on theſe firſt Principles, it can ſcarcely ſupport itſelf; but as ſoon as *Faith* comes into its Aid, it remains

(*a*) Suar. Diſp. vi. de Fide, Sect. 3. Art. 13.

firm and impregnable. Reflect on that *Axiom* ſo common, and approved of by the unanimous Conſent of all the ancient *Philoſophy, out of Nothing Nothing can be produced. Plato* building on this Foundation as moſt ſolid, and immoveable, believed the World was formed of Matter eternally pre-exiſtent. *Ariſtotle* that it had no Beginning. This Principle has been rejected by *Faith*. Why may not the ſame befall other *Axioms* by the Power of *God?* Was not *Des-Cartes* of Opinion that by that Power, one and the ſame Thing might be, and not be, one and the ſame Propoſition might be true and falſe at the ſame Time? From whence it manifeſtly follows, that when Reaſon applies itſelf to firſt Principles, although it finds in them a ſupreme human Certainty, nevertheleſs there is ſomewhat wanting to them, to their being certain with perfect Certainty; and this Defect is ſupplied by *Faith*.

Not only theſe *Axioms*, and firſt Principles, but likewiſe other Propoſitions of leſs Extent, and not ſo eaſily believed by human Underſtanding, derive their Validity and Certainty from *Faith*. Many Inſtances of which we find in holy Scriptures, in the Councils, and Decrees

crees of the Church: as for Example; that Propoſition you have advanced, namely *Jeſus Chriſt* is a rational Animal, not only acquires its Certainty by the Argument you have propoſed, and by Reaſon, but by *Faith* alſo. Theſe Propoſitions likewiſe become certain to me by *Faith*, viz. Man is compoſed of Body and Soul, is endowed with Senſe and Life; I am and I live, becauſe I believe; and know I believe. Theſe Propoſitions that I find to be certain by Reaſon and human Certainty, when *Faith* ſupervenes, become certain by a divine Certainty; and all thoſe Obſcurities which poſſeſſed my Mind, vaniſh. 'Tis truly a great Advantage we derive from *Faith* and *Theology* among many other, that our ſtaggering Underſtanding is thereby conducted to a full, clear, and certain Knowledge of *Truth*.

You may inſiſt, and ſay the Form call'd *Syllogiſtical*, is not a Retainer to *Faith*; and that in this Form, there can be no other but human Certainty, and yet notwithſtanding the Certainty of the Concluſion depends on this Form; and if this Concluſion appertains to *Faith*, this Concluſion ſo appertaining to *Faith*, will have no other than human Certainty.

But you muſt know that the Certainty of this Concluſion that appertains to *Faith*, depends not on the Certainty of the *Syllogiſtick* Form, which in Reſpect to it, to ſpeak in the Terms of the *School*, is purely accidental. For Divines, and principally St. *Thomas Aquinas* (*a*), teach that *divine Science is not diſcurſive, or ratiocinative, but abſolute and ſimple*; and the Underſtanding carried by one and the ſame Act towards the material Object, by Reaſon of the formal; and that by one and the ſame Act, we believe in God, and believe *God is*; as *Faith* entring into our Underſtanding, cauſes both itſelf, and the Things it propoſes, to be received and believed. As Light renders other Things, and itſelf viſible.

For this Reaſon, *Saint Chryſoſtom* (*b*), whoſe Teſtimony I have already alledged, ſays very pertinently, that Things obſcure, are made viſible by *Faith*; and thoſe that are viſible, confirmed and made certain by thoſe which are inviſible; and that *Faith* cannot ſupport itſelf, if it does not convince us more certainly of Things which are not viſible,

(*a*) Thom. 22. Q. 1. A. 1. (*b*) Chryſoſt. in Ebr. xi. 2 Homil. 21.

than

than we are convinced of Things that are ſo.

As touching the Motives of Credibility, which preparing the Mind to receive *Faith*, ought according to you to be not only certain by ſupreme and human Certainty, but by ſupreme and abſolute Certainty; I will oppoſe *Gabriel Biel* (*c*) to you, who pronounces that to receive *Faith*, 'tis ſufficient that the Motives of Credibility be propoſed as probable. Do you believe that Children, illiterate, groſs, ignorant People, who have ſcarcely the Uſe of Reaſon, and notwithſtanding have received the Gift of *Faith*, do moſt clearly, and moſt ſtedfaſtly conceive thoſe forementioned Motives of Credibility? No; without Doubt; but the *Grace* of *God* comes into their Aſſiſtance, and ſuſtains the Imbecility of Nature and Reaſon.

This is the common Opinion of Divines. Reaſon has Need of the Aid of divine *Grace*, not only in groſs, illiterate Perſons, but even in thoſe of Parts and Learning; for how clear-ſighted ſoever that may be, yet it cannot make us have *Faith*, if Celeſtial Light does not illuminate us within; becauſe as I have

(*c*) Biel in iii. Diſp. 24. Art. 3. Dub. 1.

ſaid already, divine *Faith* being of a ſuperior Order, cannot derive its Efficacy from human *Faith*. Upon which Account, the Church has condemned the *Semi-Pelagians*, for believing the Commencement of *Faith* to come from ourſelves, and not from *God*. And this gave Occaſion to that Decree of the Council of *Orange* (*a*): *If any one affirms, that without the Illumination and Inſpiration of the holy Spirit, by the meer Strength of Nature, he can think, act, chuſe aright, or conſent to the Preaching he hears concerning any good Thing, which has Reſpect to Salvation, he is deceived by a Spirit of Hereſy.*

With this agrees that Decree of the Council of *Trent*: (*b*) *If any one ſays, that without the Inſpiration of the holy Spirit, and its Aſſiſtance preventing, Man can believe in ſuch Manner as to have the Grace of Juſtification confer'd on him, let him be accurſed.* This is likewiſe the Doctrine of *Saint Thomas Aquinas* (*c*): *The Light of Faith makes Things ſeen that are believed.* He ſays moreover, *Believers have Knowledge of the Things of Faith, not in a demonſtra-*

(*a*) Concil. Araus. Cap. 7. (*b*) Concil. Trid. Seſs vi. Can. 3. (*c*) Thom. 2. 2. Q. 1. A. 4. ad 3. & A. 5. ad 1.

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*tive Way, but ſo as by the Light of Faith, it appears to them that they ought to be believed.*

## CHAP. XVI.

### *Why the Doctrine of the Academicks and Scepticks was rejected.*

AS to what remains, the Cauſes of rejecting the *Pyrrhonian* Doctrine were not as you ſuppoſe. You think it was rejected by the *Pagans* leſt *Sciences* ſhould fall into Contempt; though I have made it appear to you, that they were diligently cultivated by excellent Men, who practiſed the *Art* of *doubting*. You believe it to be rejected by the *Chriſtians*, leſt it ſhould be injurious to *Faith*, and good *Morals*; although in the Time of *Cicero*, we own either it totally fell, as he frequently ſays; or rather to ſpeak more accurately, was reduced to a few Hands. The *Chriſtians*, who did not then appear in the World, could not fear any Thing, in Reſpect to their Religion or Morals, from the *Scepticks*. But the

Rejection of it is rather to be aſcribed to the Pride which is natural to Man: for being puffed up and ſwelled with this *Opinion*, that his *Reaſon* renders him ſuperior to all other Animals, that he is endowed with Underſtanding capable of *Sciences*, born to reaſon, to conceive, to know, he is angry to ſee himſelf ſtripped of all theſe Advantages, and in ſome ſort degraded, and condemned to the Darkneſs of perpetual Ignorance.

He cannot then bear to be awakened out of ſo agreeable a Dream, and prefers an honourable Folly, to poor and obſcure Wiſdom. And that he may not ſee himſelf ejected by the *Sceptiks* out of this ancient Poſſeſſion of Science, as out of a rich Inheritance he holds of Nature, is better ſatisfied to oppoſe them Sword in Hand, and by Violence, as the Raviſhers of Reaſon, and Deſtroyers of *Science*, than act againſt them by legal Methods; foreſeeing that otherwiſe he muſt be deprived of that which without any Right he had uſurped.

You ſee by this Time, if I am not miſtaken, how weak and frivolous all the Objections of the *Dogmatiſts* are. They might notwithſtanding affect me, if among

among *Philosophers* there was ever a Sect exempt from Contradictions; or if any *Philosopher* approved a Doctrine different from his own. But since there was continual War between them, we are not to expect they should keep the Peace with us. And seeing we make Profession of contradicting all other, we must not, to be equitable, take it ill, that many should contradict us. As our Objections cannot convince them of their Error, and they refuse to yield to our Remonstrances, it is but just they should give us leave to be free from any Surprize by their Reproaches.

That learned Sect of the *Pythagoreans*, which arrived to such prodigious Erudition, having first been harras'd with infinite Calumnies and Ralleries, was at length absolutely silenced: whether because *Plato*, *Aristotle*, *Speusippus*, and others besides, plundered and appropriated the best Discoveries of theirs to themselves, and after they had retrenched and reformed what they pleased, separated and collected whatever could contribute to Rallery, and give Occasion thereby to Jesters to turn that Sect into Ridicule, as *Porphyrius* (*a*) has

(*a*) Porpyr. Vit. Pyth.

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conjectured: or whether according to the Surmiſes of *Jamblichus* (*b*), certain little ſuppoſititious Books, and ſtrange and odious Symbols attributed to that Sect, procured it ſo much Contradiction: in the mean Time, the Contempt it fell under, did not hinder neither *Jamblichus* I have now mentioned, nor many others from remaining conſtant Adherers to the Party, and from boaſting that they had the divine Protection, on which they relied.

How great Injuries were done to the *Epicureans*, as having attacked the Gods, ſubverted Religion, corrupted Manners, extinguiſhed Shame, and authorized Libertiniſm? They became ſo infamous, that the *Jews* of this latter Age make Uſe of the Name *Epicure* to expreſs Arrogance, Impurity, and the very Sinks of Debauchery. We have ſeen nevertheleſs in our Days, a *Gaſſendi*, bearing the Character of a *Prieſt*, and who merited, and had the Approbation of many learned and pious Perſons, make this Sect revive, though aboliſhed for ſo many Years. *Des-Cartes* himſelf, who endeavour'd to demonſtrate the *Exiſtence* of a God, and the

(*b*) Jambl. Vit. Pyth. libr. 1. Cap. i.

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*Distinction* of the *Soul* and *Body*, was not exempt from Censure: and nevertheless we see many Persons, both grave and learned, of all Conditions, embrace and defend his Sentiments.

## CHAP. XVII.

### *Conclusion.*

THINGS being as I have now represented them, we cannot promise our selves to be more favourably treated by the Vulgar of the Republick of Learning; but the Suspicions and Complaints formed against us, will never prevail to make us relinquish our Design, of following what shall appear to be probable, 'till we are influenced by greater Probability. In the mean while, Nothing will induce us to grant that we know what we do not know, and shall always prefer the Liberty of our own Judgment, to the Approbation of those who are prepossessed with their vain *Ideas*.

Your's, said that excellent Man, full of Civility and Candour, shall with me be

be ever of great Weight, to confirm me in theſe Thoughts: and I greatly wiſh it may be in my Power to merit it. Certainly this free and diſintereſted Method of *Philoſophizing* you profeſs, which runs through all *Sciences*, without being a Bigot to any, ſufficiently ſhews you have ſome Reſpect, or at leaſt that you have not much Averſion for our Party. If you are of another Opinion, I ſhall not oppoſe it, and don't pretend you ſhould give up that *philoſophical* Liberty, which I ſo carefully reſerve to my ſelf.

I own, ſaid I to him, you have moved me; but it is an Affair that well deſerves to be examined, and thoroughly inſpected at Leiſure. And if other Conſiderations make me relinquiſh your Doctrine, although in Point of *Philoſophy* we ought to have little Deference for Authority, your's nevertheleſs would incline me to embrace it. I had rather, he anſwered, you would do ſo by Amity than Deference, leſt a Diverſity of Opinions ſhould any way invalidate the ſtrict Alliance, and Uniformity of Life and Studies which is between us.

Such

Such was the Converſation I had with this able *Philoſopher*, neither frivolous, as I thought, nor diſagreeable; for why ſhould I diſſemble? And in Reality it ſtruck me.

THE

29 OC 64

# THE INDEX.

## BOOK I.

TRUTH cannot be known to human Understanding, with perfect and absolute Certainty, by the Help of Reason. Pag. 1

CHAP. I. We must first shew: *ibid.*

1. What Philosophy is. 2
2. What human Understanding is. 3
3. What Idea is. *ibid.*
4. What Thought is. 4
5. What Reason is. *ibid.*
6. What Truth is. *ibid.*
7. There are many Kinds and Degrees of Certainty. The Certainty of Faith perfects the Certainty of human Nature. 6

CHAP. II. Man cannot know Truth by the Assistance of Reason with perfect and entire Certainty. First Proof of it taken from the holy Pen-Men. 10

CHAP. III. Second Proof. Because Man cannot know with perfect and absolute Certainty, whether an external Object answers exactly to the Idea of it which is imprinted within him. 19

1. The

# *The* INDEX.

1. The Images, Species, or Shadows, which flow from external Bodies, and are preſented to us, are not like them. p. 21
2. The Fidelity or Truth of the interpoſed Medium, through which the Shadow or Species of the external Object paſſes to come to the Inſtruments of our Senſes is dubious. 22
3. The Fidelity of the Senſes dubious. 25
4. The Fidelity of the Nerves and animal Spirits dubious. 27
5. The Fidelity of the Brain dubious. 31
6. The Fidelity of the Spirit or Underſtanding of Man dubious, and its Nature unknown to us. 33

CHAP. IV. Third Proof. The Underſtanding of Man cannot know the Nature of Things with abſolute Certainty. 36

CHAP. V. Fourth Proof. Things cannot be known with perfect Certainty, by Reaſon of their continual Change. 41

CHAP. VI. Fifth Proof. Things cannot be known with abſolute Certainty, by Reaſon of the Difference of Men. 44

CHAP. VII. Sixth Proof. Things cannot be known with perfect Certainty, becauſe their Cauſes are infinite. 47

CHAP. VIII. Seventh Proof. Man has no certain Rule of Truth. 49

CHAP. IX. Eighth Proof. 1. Objections againſt Evidence. 54
2. The Objects preſented to the Minds of thoſe who are aſleep, drunk, or mad, are as evident as the Objects preſented to the Minds of thoſe who are awake, ſober and in their right Senſes. 57

CHAP. X. Ninth Proof. 62
1. Reaſon for doubting of all Things propoſed by *Des-Cartes*; viz. we know not whether God has not created us of ſuch a Nature, as to be always deceived. 62

2. From

2. From whence it follows that the intimate Perception of Things is dubious. p. 64
CHAP. XI. Tenth Proof. 'Tis begging the Question, to go to prove by Reason that Reason is certain. 65
CHAP. XII. Eleventh Proof. Reasoning is uncertain. 66
CHAP. XIII. Twelfth Proof. It follows from the Dissentions of the Dogmatists, that we are not to adhere to any of their Sects. 69
CHAP. XIV. Thirteenth Proof. The Law of doubting has been established by excellent Philosophers. 70
1. *Anacharsis.* 74
2. *Pherecydes.* *ibid.*
3. *Pythagoras.* *ibid.*
4. *Empedocles.* 75
5. *Gorgias Leontin.* *ibid.*
6. *Xenophanes.* *ibid.*
7. *Epicharmus.* *ibid.*
8. *Parmenides.* 76
9. *Xeniades.* *ibid.*
10. *Zeno* of *Elea.* *ibid.*
11. *Heraclitus.* *ibid.*
12. *Anaxagoras.* 77
13. *Democritus.* *ibid.*
14. *Protagoras.* *ibid.*
15. *Socrates.* *ibid.*
16. *Plato*, Author of the first Academy. 80
17. *Aristotle.* 81
18. *Arcesilas*, Author of the second Academy. *ibid.*
19. *Lacydes.* 84
20. *Carneades*, Author of the third Academy. *ibid.*
21. *Clitomachus.* 87
22. *Philo*, Author of the fourth Academy. 88
23. *Antiochus*, Author of the fifth Academy. 89
24. *Cicero.* 90
25. *Varro*, *Piso*, *Lucullus*, and *Brutus.* 91
26. The Origin of *Pyrrhonism.* 93
27. *Metrodorus.* *ibid.*

28. *Anax-*

28. *Anaxarchus.* *ibid.*
29. *Pyrrho.* 94
30. How many Academies there have truly been, and the Difference between the Academy, and *Pyrrhoniſm.* 100
31. There have been two Academies, the old and the new, and the new was true *Pyrrhoniſm.* 105
32. The Difference between the new Academy, and the Sect of the Scepticks, with the Reconciliation of them. Firſt Difference. 106
33. Second Difference. *ibid.*
34. Third Difference. 108
35. Fourth Difference. 109
36. Fifth Difference. *ibid.*
37. Sixth Difference. 111
38. Seventh Difference. 112
39. Why Philoſophers, who make Profeſſion of doubting, would rather paſs for Academicks than *Pyrrhoniſts.* 115
40. It is falſe to ſay that the Sect of the Scepticks, or *Pyrrhonians*, was interrupted after *Timon.* *ibid.*
41. *Timon* of *Phlius.* 116
42. *Nauſiphanes* of *Teos.* 117
43. *Theodoſus* of *Bithynia.* *ibid.*
44. *Æneſidemus* of *Cnoſſus.* 118
45. *Ptolemæus* of *Alexandria.* *ibid.*
46. 47. *Cornelius Celſus. Favorin.* *ibid.*
48. *Sextus Empiricus.* *ibid.*
49. Whether *Sextus Empiricus*, and *Sextus* of *Chæronea* were the ſame. *ibid.*
50. Great Affinity between the Sceptick, Empirick, and Methodick Sects. 121
51. *Lucian.* 123
52. *Uranius.* *ibid.*
53. And beſides of the Number of the Dogmatiſts, *Porphyrius.* 124
54. *Ariſtippus.* *ibid.*
55 *Herillus* of *Carthage.* 125

56. *Menedemus* of *Eretria*. *ibid.*
57. The Eretrick and Megarick Philoſophers. *ibid.*
58. *Monimus* the Cynick 126
59. Among foreign Nations, the Magi. *ibid.*
60. The *Brachmans*. *ibid.*
61. Certain *Turk* Philoſophers nam'd the Aſtoniſh'd. 127
62. Among the *Jews*, the *Eſſens*. *ibid.*
63. And the *Seboreans*. *ibid.*
64. *R. Moſes* Son of *Maimonides*. *ibid.*
65. And amongſt the *Arabians*, the Diſcourſers. 128

CHAP. XV. 1. We may conclude from what has been ſaid, that we muſt doubt, as the only Way to avoid Errors. 130
2. The Confidence of the Dogmatiſts has produced an Infinity of Errors. 131
3. The Academicks and Scepticks affirming Nothing cannot be deceived; and they only deſerve the Name of Philoſophers. 132

## BOOK II.

THE moſt ſure and legitimate Way of Philoſophizing exactly explained. 135

CHAP. 1. Man is naturally deſtitute of Means neceſſary to know Truth moſt clearly and certainly; he may know it in ſome Meaſure, but not with the utmoſt Clearneſs and Certainty. 137

CHAP. II. Faith ſupplies the Defect of Reaſon, and renders Things moſt certain, which were leſs certain by Reaſon. 142

CHAP. III. 1. There is Nothing in the Underſtanding that was not firſt in the Senſes. 146
2. Againſt *Plato*. 148
3. Againſt *Proclus*. 149
4. And

4. And againſt *Des-Cartes.* 151
CHAP. IV. In the Uſe of Life we muſt follow Things probable, as true. 159
CHAP. V. Rule or CRITERIUM of Probability. 161
CHAP. VI. The End propoſed in the Art of doubting. 163
CHAP. VII. We are not to adhere to the Opinions of any Author. 166
CHAP. VIII. In every Sect we ſhould chuſe what appears to be beſt. 168
CHAP. IX. Above all we muſt take Care not to admit any Thing contrary to Faith. 169
CHAP. X. The Sect of Eclecticks has been embraced by great Men. 170
CHAP. XI. Since we are not to adhere to the Academick, Sceptick, nor Eclectick Sect, nor to any other, we ought to adhere to our own Opinions. 176

## BOOK III.

THE Objections of our Adverſaries propoſed and refuted. 177
CHAP. I. Firſt Objection, that we deſtroy the Uſe of Life. 179
CHAP. II. Second Objection, that we deprive our ſelves of Science. 181
CHAP. III. Third Objection, that we have a CRITERIUM, or Rule of diſcerning Truth from Falſhood. 182
CHAP. IV. Fourth Objection, that our Manner of Philoſophizing makes no Sect. 183
CHAP. V. Fifth Objection, that when we ſay there is Nothing true nor falſe, nor Demonſtration, we condemn our ſelves. 184

# *The INDEX.*


CHAP. VI. Sixth Objection, that we can ſcarcely doubt without Impiety, whether God has ſo made Man as to be always deceived. 185

CHAP. VII. Seventh Objection, that this Law of doubting ſeems to hinder the Mind of Man from ſubmitting to Faith, and to favour Corruption of Manners. 186

CHAP. VIII. Anſwer to the Objections of our Adverſaries. 190

CHAP. IX. Firſt Objection. 192

CHAP. X. Second Objection. 194

CHAP. XI. Third Objection. 199

CHAP. XII. Fourth Objection. 206

CHAP. XIII. Fifth Objection. 209

CHAP. XIV. Sixth Objection. 214

CHAP. XV. Seventh Objection. 216

CHAP. XVI. Why the Doctrine of the Academicks and Scepticks was rejected. 231

CHAP. XVII. Concluſion of the Work. 235


*FINIS.*

# APPENDIX.

## Monſieur HUET's DISSERTATION, &c.

### *To the Duke* de Montauzier.

YOU were pleas'd, my Lord, that I ſhould engage in the Diſpute you had with the Abbot *de St. Luc*, concerning *Apollo* ‖ : I have another in my turn with Monſieur *Deſpreaux*, of which I moſt humbly beg your Lordſhip would pleaſe to be Judge. It is concerning a Paſſage in *Longinus*, which before I proceed to, muſt be made known to you. It is *Verbatim* thus: * *The* Jewiſh *Legiſlator, who was a Man*

‖ *The Abbot maintain'd, That* Apollo *and the* Sun *were not the ſame God.*

† Longinus de Sublimitate, Sect. 9.

*of no vulgar Underſtanding, having a due Notion of the Power of God, did expreſs it accordingly, when he writ in the beginning of his Laws, theſe Words:* GOD SAID, *What?* LET THE LIGHT BE MADE, LET THE EARTH BE MADE, AND IT WAS MADE, *Gen.* ch. I. v. 3.

* [*The Words are, in the Original* Hebrew, LET THERE BE LIGHT, AND THE LIGHT WAS; *which is more Majeſtick than that of,* Let the Light be made, and the Light was made; *for theſe laſt Words ſeem to imply, that God commanded ſome other Being to make the Light, and that that other Being made it. What occaſion'd its being ſo tranſlated into* French, *was the vulgar* Latin *Verſion:* Fiat lux, & lux facta eſt, *becauſe it follow'd the* Greek *Copy, which ſays,* γενηθήτω φῶς, καὶ ἐγένετο φῶς, *and that it tranſlates commonly* γίνεσθαι *by* fieri, *altho' that Word often ſignifies ſimply* TO BE MADE. *If the vulgar Tranſlation occaſion'd the Catholick Tranſlators of the Bible to commit this Fault; the Tranſlators of* Longinus *ought not to have committed the ſame, as they have done in the* Latin *and* French. *But the Diſpute between Meſſieurs* Huet *and* Deſpreaux *does not turn upon this.*] *The former goes on thus.*

When firſt I read *Longinus*, I was ſhock'd at this Remark, the ſaid Paſſage out of *Moſes* not ſeeming to me to be well choſen for an Example of the Sublime. I remember, *My Lord*, being one Day at your Houſe, long before I had the Honour to be in the || *Dauphin*'s Family, I told you my Opinion of this Remark; and tho' the Company was pretty numerous, there was but one ſingle Perſon that

* *The Reflections throughout this Piece, which are in the* Italick *Character, between Crotchets, are by Monſieur Le* Clerc.

|| *M.* Huet *was Governour to the* Dauphin.

thought

thought otherwiſe. I have been ſince oblig'd to make this Opinion Publick, in the Book I wrote to prove the Truth of our Religion: For having undertaken to enumerate the Prophane Authors, who have given Teſtimony to the Antiquity of the Books of *Moſes*, I found *Longinus* among them, and becauſe all that he ſays of him is only upon another's Credit; I conceiv'd my ſelf accountable to the Publick for this Conjecture, and to give them my principal Reaſon for it, which is this, That if he had ſeen what follows, and what precedes that Paſſage of *Moſes*, he wou'd ſoon have been ſenſible that it had nothing of the Sublime. My Words are theſe: *Longinus, Prince of Criticks, in the Excellent Book he writ touching the* Sublime, *gives a very great Commendation of* Moſes; *for he ſays*, That he had a due Notion of the Power of God, and expreſs'd it accordingly by writing in the Beginning of his Laws, That GOD SAID, LET THERE BE LIGHT MADE, AND IT WAS MADE; LET THE EARTH BE MADE, AND IT WAS MADE. *However, what* LONGINUS *here alledges from* MOSES, *as a Sublime and figurative Expreſſion, ſeems to me to be perfectly Simple.* MOSES, *it is true, relates a thing that is in it ſelf great, but expreſſes it in a Manner, which is by no means ſo. Which convinces me, that* LONGINUS *did not take theſe Words from the the Original; for if he had gone to the Fountain-Head, and perus'd the very Books of* MOSES, *he wou'd have found a great Simplicity running through the whole; and I believe* MOSES *affected it, by reaſon of the Dignity of the Subject, which by being barely related, makes a ſufficient Impreſſion upon the Senſes, without any need of ſtudied Ornaments to heighten it: Tho' indeed it is manifeſt both from* CANTICLES *and the Book of* JOB, *which 'tis my Opinion* MOSES *wrote, that he very well underſtood the Sublime.*

Now, tho' I knew, that Monſieur *Deſpreaux* had tranſlated *Longinus*, tho' I had even read his Work,

and, after a careful Examination, gave that Judgment upon it which it deſerves: Yet I did not believe, he had taken that Author into his Protection, and enter'd into ſo ſtrict a Participation of Intereſts with him, that to find fault with *Longinus*, was doing an affront to Monſieur *Deſpreaux*; any more than to three or four other Learned Men, who had tranſlated that Author before him. God forbid, I ſhould go about to eſpouſe all the Quarrels of *Origin*, and to undertake to plead his Cauſe, when he is treated ev'ry Day as an Heretick and Idolater. And yet, *my Lord*, you know I have enter'd into Engagements with him of as high a Nature at leaſt as Monſieur *Deſpreaux* has done with *Longinus* *. And therefore, to ſpeak Truth, I was ſomewhat ſurpriz'd, when finding the other Day upon your Table the New Edition of his Works, in opening the Book, I fell upon theſe Words: † *What then ſhall we ſay of one of the moſt Learned Men of our Age, who tho' he had the Advantage of the Goſpel Light, yet did not find out the Beauty of this Paſſage* (he is ſpeaking of the Paſſage of *Moſes* reported by *Longinus*) *but has preſum'd to advance, in a Book he wrote in Demonſtration of the Chriſtian Religion; that* Longinus *was miſtaken in thinking theſe Words* SUBLIME? *However, I have the Satisfaction to find there are Perſons no leſs conſiderable for their Piety than for their Learning, who are of another Opinion. The* || *Tranſlators of the Book of* Geneſis, *in their Preface, among ſeveral other excellent Proofs, that that*

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* *Monſieur* Huet *publiſh'd in* 1668. *Origenis* in ſacras Scripturas Commentaria, quæcunque Græce reperiri potuerunt, cum Latina Interpretatione, Notis & Obſervationibus. In *Fol.* 2 *Vol.*

† *See M.* Boileau's *Preface to* Longinus.

|| *Meſſieurs* de Port Royal.

*Book*

*Book was dictated by the Holy Ghoſt, have mention'd this Paſſage of* Longinus, *to ſhew how much Chriſtians ought to be convinc'd of a Truth ſo clear, that a* Pagan *himſelf cou'd not help being ſenſible of its Power by the Light of* Reason *only.* I was ſurpriz'd, I ſay, at theſe Words, *my Lord*, for Monſieur *Deſpreaux* and I have taken ſuch different Paths in the Region of Learning, that I never thought to have met him in my way, but fancy'd my ſelf out of the reach of his terrible Pen. Neither did I any more believe that all *Longinus* ſays is Goſpel, and may not be contradicted without incurring the Guilt of Preſumption; or that we were oblig'd to believe, as if it were an Article of Faith, that theſe Words of *Moſes* are Sublime, and that not conſenting to it, was as good as queſtioning whether the Books of *Moſes* were inſpir'd by the Holy Ghoſt. To conclude, I did not expect to ſee *Longinus* Canoniz'd, and my ſelf in a manner Excommunicated, as I am, by Monſieur *Deſpreaux*. And yet, as whimſical as that Cenſure is, he might have expreſs'd it in more genteel and ſofter Terms. As for my Part, *my Lord*, I mean to let you ſee, in my own Juſtification, that not only there is not any thing a-kin to the Sublime in this Paſſage of *Moſes*, but likewiſe, if there be any ſuch Thing, as *Longinus* wou'd have it, the Sublime is very ill employ'd, if it be permitted to ſpeak in thoſe Terms of a *Holy Book.*

'Tis a receiv'd Maxim among All who have treated of Eloquence, that nothing gives greater force to the Sublime, than introducing it appoſitely, and that it is no leſs a fault to make uſe of the Sublime, when the Diſcourſe ought to be Simple, than to fall into the Simple, when it ought to be Sublime. *Longinus* himſelf, without producing others, is a ſufficient Witneſs of this. Tho' Authors did not ſay it, Reaſon does. How are we ſhock'd when we light

on a groveling flat Expreſſion in a noble and pompous Diſcourſe? On the contrary, how are we ſurpriz'd when a Diſcourſe which was ſimple and unadorn'd, is on a ſudden hoiſted up to the Sky and loſt in ſome glaring Figure? Wou'd not a Man be thought Mad, if, in giving his Friends an Account of ſome ſtrange Accident he was witneſs to, after having related the beginning in a familiar ordinary Stile, he ſhou'd ſtart out into an Apoſtrophe, and direct his Speech to the Perſon who was principally concern'd in the Action, tho' abſent, and then return to his former Simplicity, and go on to the end of his Story with the ſame Air he began it? Wou'd ſuch Apoſtrophizing be lookt on as an Example of the Sublime; rather, wou'd it not be lookt on as an Inſtance of Diſtraction?

And yet *Moſes* is charg'd with offending againſt this Rule, by thoſe who maintain that he ſoar'd above the ordinary Stile in his Account of the Creation of Light. For if we examine the firſt Chapter of *Geneſis* throughout, and indeed all the Five Books of the Law (but not the *Canticles*, which are of another Kind) and all the Hiſtorical Books of the Bible, there will be found ſo great a Simplicity, that not a few Perſons of the laſt Ages (whoſe Parts were unexceptionably Polite, but ſpoilt with being too converſant with prophane Learning) and even St. *Auſtin*, before he turn'd Chriſtian, cou'd not endure to read them.

[*To the* Canticles *we muſt add the Prophecies, which are in a more elevated Stile than Narration, and which the* Hebrews *call* משׁל Maſchal *or Figur'd. See* Gen. xlix. *and* Deut. xxxiii. *The other Parts of* Moſes's *Narration, is every where the ſimpleſt in the World. Thoſe who cou'd not endure the Stile of the Bible were, as 'tis ſaid,* Angelius Politianus, *and* Peter Bembo, *who did not care to read it, for fear it ſhould marr their Stile.*

*Stile. But their Diſlike fell rather upon the Tranſlation than the Original.*]

I ſhall not go farther than this firſt Chapter, to prove my Aſſertion. Is there any thing more ſimple than the entrance of the Recital of the World's Creation: *In the beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth. And the Earth was without form, and void, and Darkneſs was upon the Face of the Deep: And the Spirit of God moved upon the Face of the Waters.* *Moſes* was very ſenſible, that his Subject carry'd its own Recommendation along with it, and its Sublime too; that barely to relate it, was raiſing it high enough; and that the leſs of his own there was in it, 'twould be ſo much the better; and as he was not Ignorant, that an exalted Stile is not proper in all Places (which *Longinus* himſelf owns) ſo when he took upon him to declare to Mankind a Truth which puts to Confuſion all Prophane Philoſophy, in letting them know that GOD, by his Word, cou'd produce ſomething out of nothing, he was of Opinion, that the beſt way of teaching this grand Principle, was by common unartful Expreſſions. For what reaſon then, after he had given an account of the Creation of the Heaven and the Earth in ſo unſtudy'd a manner: For what reaſon, I ſay, ſhou'd he on a ſudden forſake his Simplicity, to launch out into a ſublime Deſcription of the Creation of Light? *And God ſaid, Let there be Light, and there was Light.* Why ſhou'd he afterwards relapſe into his Simplicity for good and all? *And God ſaw the Light that it was good, and God divided the Light from the Darkneſs, and God called the Light Day, and the Darkneſs he call'd Night: And the Evening and the Morning were the firſt Day.* All that follows bears the ſame Character: *And God ſaid, Let there be a Firmament in the midſt of the Waters, and let it divide the Waters from the Waters. And God made the Firmament, and divided the Waters which were under the Firmament, from the Waters which were above*

*the Firmament: And it was ſo. And God call'd the Firmament Heaven: And the Evening and the Morning were the ſecond Day.* God made the Firmament after the ſame manner as he had form'd the Light, *i. e.* by his Word. The manner of the recital which *Moſes* makes of the Creation of Light, does not at all differ from that of the Creation of the Firmament. Since therefore, 'tis evident, that the Narration of the latter is very Simple, how can any Man ſtand in it, that the Narration of the former is Sublime?

[*Theſe Reaſons will carry great weight with thoſe who have attentively read the Writings of* Moſes *in the Original, or even in the Verſions, and who are ſomewhat accuſtom'd to the Stile of the* Hebrews. *But there are two Things, which may obſtruct our perceiving the Slenderneſs of* Longinus's *Foundation in this Place. The firſt is, The great Idea Men juſtly have of* Moſes, *as a Perſon altogether extraordinary. In this Suppoſition, they attribute to him, without thinking on't, ſuch a ſort of Stile as becomes the high Idea they have of him; and fancy that his Language muſt be Sublime, when he ſpeaks of great Things; and, on the other Hand, Middling, when he ſpeaks of middling Things; and Simple, when he's upon vulgar Things; according to the ordinary Rules of the Art, laid down by the* Greek *and* Latin *Rhetoricians. Poſſeſt of this Notion, when they come to read his Writings, they take it for granted, it is all according as they think it ſhou'd be, tho' there's nothing in't. They imagine to themſelves Rhetorical Figures, where there's none, and aſcribe to him certain exquiſite and profound Meanings which he never thought of. Now if any Man ſhou'd urge, that the Holy Spirit, who directed the Pen of* Moſes, *was capable of the moſt elevated Views, and that conſequently we cannot give too ſublime an Explanation to what he delivers; I anſwer, that tho' no Body can doubt of the great Deſignations of the Holy Spirit, yet unleſs He makes them known to us, himſelf, it is not lawful for us to imagine them at Pleaſure, and to make Him pro-*

*ject*

*ject Things, purely becauſe we fancy they are worthy of Him. I will not ſcruple to ſay, that He has executed his Deſigns by Inſtruments, weak, and of themſelves incapable to contribute thereunto; not only under the Old but the New Diſpenſation; herein it is, that the Divine Providence is to be admir'd, and this ſhews that the Eſtabliſhment of the Worſhip of One Sole God and its Propagation for ſo many Ages, is an Effect of his Power and not of Human Means. Therefore, without regarding the Rules of Rhetoric, whether fix'd, or to be fix'd; the Sacred Books have made us acquainted with what was neceſſary for us to know, in the plaineſt, moſt unelaborate manner that cou'd be, in ſuch a Stile as Men uſe in their ordinary courſe. M.* Heut *will ſpeak to this Point preſently. The ſecond Thing which put* Longinus *upon thinking he ſaw a ſublime Expreſſion in* Moſes, *and which caus'd others to applaud his Remark, is, They conſider'd this Expreſſion a-part and independant of every thing elſe,* God ſaid, Let there be Light and there was Light; *as if they had met with it in ſome* Greek, *or* Latin *Author, who had made uſe of it in a Piece of Eloquence, in order to repreſent the Divine Power in the moſt heighten'd Terms. Taking it ſo, the Expreſſion has indeed the look of Sublime, and this was what deceived* Longinus, *who in all probability never read* Moſes, *as will by and by appear. In after Times, Chriſtians, prepoſſeſt in the manner aforeſaid, and ſeeing a* Pagan *was of Opinion, that the Expreſſion was Sublime, they thought they could do no leſs in Honour of* Moſes *than to joyn in the ſame Sentiment, as if it had been ſcandalous in a Chriſtian, not to admire what a* Heathen *admir'd in his Writings. M.* Deſpreaux *has countenanced this Vulgar Byaſs, againſt M.* Huet; *but if he examines it cloſely, he will find 'tis nothing but a groundleſs Prevention of the Fancy. As for M.* de Sacy, *whatever his Piety may be, his Authority can't be very great in matters of Criticiſm and an exact Explication of Holy Scripture, unleſs he has ſome Idea of both. But let's hear our Prelate.*]

The

The Sequel is perfectly of a piece with the Beginning; he ſtill keeps to his Simplicity, when he tells us, how God form'd the Stars with Light in 'em. *And God ſaid, Let there be Lights in the Firmament of the Heaven, to divide the Day from the Night: And let them be for Signs, and for Seaſons, and for Days and Years. And let them be for Lights in the Firmament of the Heaven, to give light upon the Earth: And it was ſo. And God made two great Lights; the greater Light to rule the Day, and the leſſer Light to rule the Night, he made the Stars alſo. And God ſet them in the Firmament of the Heaven to give Light upon the Earth, and to rule over the Day, and over the Night, and to divide the Light from the Darkneſs: And God ſaw that it was good.* The Creation ev'n of Man, who was to rule over the Earth, who was to wear the Likeneſs of God, and who was to be his Maſter-piece; the Creation ev'n of Him, I ſay, is recounted to us in no high-flying Terms, but in common vulgar Expreſſions. *And God ſaid, Let us make Man in our Image, after our Likeneſs: And let them have Dominion over the Fiſh of the Sea, and over the Fowl of the Air, and over the Cattle, and over all the Earth, and over every creeping Thing that creepeth upon the Earth. So God created Man in his own Image, in the Image of God created he him, Male and Female created he them.* If in all this there's no ſhadow of the Sublime, I wou'd know by what particular Prerogative the Creation of the Light merited to be cloath'd with the Sublime; when ſo many other Things of a greater and nobler Nature, are deliver'd in a Stile below that we call Middling.

I likewiſe add, That if thoſe Words are Sublime, they are againſt another Rule of Eloquence, which will have the Exordiums of the greateſt and ſublimeſt Works to be Simple, that the Flame may break out in the midſt of the Smoak, as a great Maſter in that Art has it. St. *Auſtin* confines to this Rule, even thoſe

thoſe who preach the Myſteries of God: *They muſt take care*, ſays he, *in the Sublime kind, that their beginnings do not tranſgreſs the lines of Mediocrity. Moſes* has tranſgreſt them with a witneſs, if *Longinus*'s Opinion be right; ſince according to him, the Books of the Law have ſo auguſt an Exordium.

We don't find that any of the ancient Fathers of the Church, or Interpreters of the Scripture were of Opinion there was any thing extraordinary in this Paſſage, except the Subject-matter of it; which being of a very high and very illuſtrious Nature, makes a lively impreſſion upon the Reader's Mind; ſo that if he has not all the Attention that's neceſſary, he is apt to impute to the Artifice of *Words*, what is purely owing to the Dignity of the *Thing*. But if he conſiders this Expreſſion in it ſelf, abſtractedly from that grand Senſe which props it, he will find it as Simple as can poſſibly be; ſo that if *Longinus* had given Rules for the Simple as he has done for the Sublime, he wou'd have found, without thinking on't, that the Words he quotes out of *Moſes* are entirely conformable to thoſe Rules.

*It is certain that the greatneſs of a Subject often makes us miſtakenly imagine, that the Perſon who treats thereof, uſes the Sublime, tho' he delivers himſelf in a very Simple manner. This is what has been very well obſerv'd by the ancient Rhetorician, who has given us a Treatiſe of Stile, under the Name of* Demetrius Phalereus. There is, *ſays he*, a Loftineſs which conſiſts in the Things themſelves, ſuch as a great and memorable Fight on Land or Sea, or when the Diſcourſe is concerning the Heavens or the Earth; for they who hear a great Subject treated of, preſently fancy that the Orator does it in the great and Sublime Stile, and this is what they are miſtaken in. They ſhou'd obſerve not what is ſaid, but how it is ſaid; for great Things may be deliver'd in a ſimple Stile: And therefore ſome Authors have been ſaid to have a grand

Stile,

Stile, who indeed do treat of great Things, but not in a lofty manner, as *Theopompus*.

[*The ſame may be ſaid of thoſe who look for the Sublime in certain places of the Scripture, where there's nothing of it; only becauſe the Holy Penmen writ upon great Subjects. This is what befel the late M.* Tollius *in his* Latin *Note upon the Paſſage of* Longinus, *where he takes to task M.* Heut. *He viſibly confounds the ſublime Stile with the Thing it ſelf, without being aware that all thoſe who ſhall handle Things of a high Nature, tho' in Terms next a-kin to Vulgar, will, according to him, always do it in a Sublime Manner. M.* Heut *has very well ſhewn, by the whole Context of the Diſcourſe of* Moſes, *that there's no Sublime in the Expreſſion, tho' God and the Creation are the ſublimeſt Things in the Univerſe.*]

The Truth of this, continues he, will be made out by Examples. Wou'd that Man be ſuſpected of intending to expreſs himſelf Figuratively and Nobly, who ſhou'd ſay, *When I went abroad, I ſaid to my Servants, follow me, and they followed me.* Is the Marvellous in theſe Words, *I deſir'd my Friend to lend me his Horſe, and he lent him me.* One would think, on the contrary, that a Man could not expreſs himſelf in a more ſimple Manner. But if the Sublime is in the Thing it ſelf, it will appear in the Expreſſion however naked it be. Xerxes *commanded the Sea to be chain'd, and the Sea was chain'd.* Alexander *ſaid, Let* Tyre *be burnt, and the Inhabitants put to the Sword, and* Tyre *was burnt, and the Inhabitants put to the Sword.* There is in this, Elevation and Greatneſs, but it proceeds from the Subject; and not to make this Diſtinction, is to confound *Things* with *Words*; to be ignorant how to ſeparate *Art* from *Nature*, the *Workmanſhip* from the *Material*, and the Dexterity of the *Hiſtorian* from the Greatneſs and Power of the *Hero*.

[*And therefore M.* Tollius *himſelf, in a Note upon the Paſſage of* Longinus, *owns there is nothing of Sublime*

*lime in theſe Words of* Apuleius, *which are in the 7th Book of his* Metamorphoſis: Noluit eſſe *Cæſar Hæmi* latronis Collegium, & confeſtim interiit. Tantum poteſt nutus etiam magni Principis. The Emperor will'd, that the Band of the Robber *Hemus* ſhou'd be no more; and it immediately periſh'd: So powerful is the ſole Pleaſure of a mighty Prince! *M.* Tollius *is in the right to laugh at* Apuleius, *and to ſay, that without theſe laſt Words no Body would have comprehended what his Figure meant. It is likewiſe ill-grounded, for the Emperor did not by his Will alone deſtroy* Hemus's *Band, but by means of his Troops, who were commanded to purſue thoſe Robbers, and who took or kill'd them after no little Pains and Difficulty.*]

I can't believe, That a Man of *Longinus*'s exquiſite Judgment cou'd have been ſo deceiv'd, if he had read the whole Work of *Moſes*; and this is what made me ſuſpect, that he had not ſeen this Paſſage in the Original. I have another Proof of it, which ſeems irrefragable; and that is his making *Moſes* ſay, What he does not ſay. *God ſaid*, What? *Let there be Light, and there was Light; let the Earth be made, and it was made.* Theſe laſt Words are not in *Moſes*, any more than the Interrogation, * *What?* And, 'tis highly probable, *Longinus* met with it in ſome Author, who had contented himſelf with giving the Subſtance of what *Moſes* had written, without confining himſelf to his Words. *M. le Fevre* is not far from this Opinion. *It is very likely*, ſays he, *that* Longinus *had read ſomething in the Books of* Moſes, *or that he had heard ſpeak of them.*

The Philoſopher *Ariſtobulus*, tho' a *Jew*, and a paſſionate Admirer of *Moſes*, like the reſt of his Nation, yet did not forbear to diſtinguiſh the Speech

* *M.* Deſpreaux *has omitted it in his Verſion.*

which God made uſe of to create the World, from the Speech which *Moſes* made uſe of to recount that Creation to us. *We muſt not imagine* †, ſays he, *that the Voice of God is contain'd in a certain number of Words, like a Speech, but we are to believe, that it is the very Diſpoſition of Things, and 'tis in this Senſe that* Moſes *calls the Creation of the Univerſe the Voice of God; for he ſays of all his Works:* God ſaid, and it was. You ſee, my Lord, that this Remark does not affect the Creation of Light only, but the Creation of all God's Works, and that, according to this Author, the Marvellous and the Sublime which are in the Hiſtory of the Creation, are in the Speech of God, which is his very Operation. *Ariſtobulus* goes on thus: *And this, in my Opinion, is what* Pythagoras, Socrates *and* Plato *had their Eye to, when they ſaid, that as often as they contemplated the Creation of the World, they thought they heard the Voice of God.* Thoſe Philoſophers admir'd the Sublime of the All-powerful Voice, but did not take Notice of any ſuch Sublime in the Words of *Moſes*, tho' they were no Strangers to them. For, according to the Teſtimony of the ſaid *Ariſtobulus*, ſome Parts of the Holy Scripture were tranſlated into *Greek* before *Alexander*, and *Plato* had read that Tranſlation.

[*I do not believe* Plato *ever read any thing of* Moſes, *and I have given my Reaſons for it, in my* Ars Critica, *Vol.* 3*d.* Ep. VII. *This* Ariſtobulus, *a* Jew, *and Peripatetic, ſeems to me very ſuſpicious, as well as to M.* Hody, *whom you may conſult in his Verſion of the* LXX. *Lib.* 1. *Ch.* 9, *Even tho' thoſe Books were really written by a* Jew, *who did actually live in the Time of* Ptolomeus Philometer, (*under whom we muſt place* Ariſtobulus) *yet I ſhould not, for that, be haſty to believe, that*

† Apud *Eusebium* Præp. Evang. Lib. XIII. c. 12.

Plato

Plato *had plunder'd the Holy Scripture, ſince I ſee no ſolid Proof of it, but on the contrary have very ſtrong Reaſons not to believe it. However that be, this* Ariſtobulus, *true or falſe, was very happy in his Explication of theſe Words,* And God ſaid. *I have already ſpoke to this Head in my Commentary on* Geneſis, *and will not trouble the Reader with the Repetition, but proceed to what our Prelate adds.*]

I ſay moreover, that this Expreſſion of *Moſes* is ſo far from being Sublime, that it is on the contrary very common and very familiar to the Sacred Authors; ſo that if it were a Figure, yet being ſo often brought in as it is, it wou'd ceaſe to be Sublime; becauſe it wou'd ceaſe to affect the Reader, and to make an Impreſſion on his Mind, by reaſon of its too frequent Repetition. For, according to * *Quintilian,* Figures loſe the Name of Figures, when they are too trite and too much finger'd. I could give a Thouſand Examples of this, but it ſhall ſuffice to produce ſome which can't be ſuſpected of Sublimity. God ſays to *Moſes* in the 8th Chapter of *Exodus: Say unto* Aaron, *Stretch out thy Rod and ſmite the Duſt of the Land, that it may become Lice throughout all the Land of* Egypt. *And they did ſo; for* Aaron *ſtretched out his Hand with his Rod, and ſmote the Duſt of the Earth, and it became Lice, in Man and in Beaſt.* Here's the very ſame Language as in the firſt Chapter of *Geneſis*, and this is not the beginning of a Law, which *Longinus* thought *Moſes* intended to render more awful by a ſublime Expreſſion. You have another in the 9th Chapter of *Exodus: And the Lord ſaid unto* Moſes, *Stretch forth thine Hand toward Heaven, that there may be Hail in all the Land of* Egypt; *upon Man and upon Beaſt, and*

* Lib. IX. Chap. 3.

*upon*

*upon every Herb of the Field, throughout the Land of* Egypt. *And* Moſes *ſtretch'd fourth his Rod toward Heaven, and the Lord ſent Thunder and Hail.* In the 17th Chapter of the ſame Book, *Moſes* ſays to *Joſhua*; *Go out, fight with* Amalek. *And* Joſhua *did as* Moſes *had ſaid to him, and fought with* Amalek. In the firſt Chapter of the *Paralip.* where we read that *David* having defeated the *Philiſtines*, took their Idols and caus'd them to be burn'd, the Text has it, *And* David *ſpake, and they were burn'd.* This has a greater reſemblance of the Sublime, than that which impos'd on *Longinus*; and yet the whole Narrative and Book of the *Paralip.* ſhews plainly that the Sacred Hiſtorian meant nothing leſs than to expreſs himſelf in this Place by a Figure. In the Goſpel, when the *Centurion* was willing to ſpare our Lord the trouble of going to his Houſe to cure his Son: Lord, ſaid he, you need only ſpeak the Word and my Son will be heal'd, for I obey thoſe who are above me, and the Soldiers who are under my Authority, obey me; *And I ſay to one, go, and he goeth; and to another come, and he cometh, and to my Servant, do this, and he doth it.* Had the *Centurion* the Books of the Rhetoricians and the Treatiſes of Sublime, and was he minded to ſhew to our Lord, by this Rhetorical touch, the readineſs with which he was ſerv'd? When St. *John* reports in theſe Words the Miracle wrought upon the Man that was born blind, *Jeſus ſaid unto him, go, waſh in the Pool of* Silo. *He went thither and waſht*, and when the blind Man afterwards thus relates his Cure. *He ſaid unto me, go to the Pool of* Silo *and waſh therein*; *I went thither, I waſht therein and I ſee*; do the blind Man and the Evangeliſt uſe this figurative Expreſſion to make the Miracle more admir'd? Did they think it wou'd not appear great enough, without the help of the Sublime? Was it for the ſame Reaſon, the ſame Evangeliſt relating the cure of him that had been infirm thirty eight Years

Years, expreſs'd himſelf thus: *Jeſus ſaid unto him, riſe, take up thy Bed and walk; and the Man was inſtantly heal'd, and took up his Bed and walk'd.* Does St. *Matthew* mean to garniſh the recital of his Call, when he ſays, in ſpeaking of himſelf; *Jeſus* ſaid unto him, follow me; and he riſing up, follow'd him? Has he the ſame Deſign, when ſpeaking of the Man who had a wither'd Hand, and who was heal'd by our Lord, he uſes theſe Words: *Then he ſaid to the Man, ſtretch out thy Hand, and he ſtretched it out?*

[*The Examples produc'd here by M.* Heut, *are liable to ſome Exception; becauſe they refer to Words really ſpoken and executed in their proper Senſe, by Men. And the Things ſo mention'd, cou'd not be more ſimply or more naturally expreſs'd. But in this Deſcription of the Creation of the World,* God ſaid, and his Commands were executed; *the Action of God is repreſented figuratively, under the Image of a Command, to ſignify, that he made the whole by his Will; and therein conſiſts the Figure, which, however, has nothing Sublime in* Moſes, *who in his Narrations had nothing leſs in his Thoughts, than to expreſs himſelf in a loſty Strain.*]

Theſe Ways of ſpeaking, continues M. *Huet*, are not peculiar to the Holy Penmen; when the *Jews*, who came after them, ſpeak of God, they often Name him thus: *He that ſpoke, and the World was made*; to ſignify, Him that created the World by his Word, ſo they name him in their dogmatical Works, which are void of all Ornament and Figure. The commoneſt Topic of Praiſe, which *Mahomet* uſes in reference to God in his *Alcoran*, is, that when he Wills any thing, *he ſays, be it*; *and it is.* All this demonſtrates, that the Expreſſion of *Moſes*; *God ſaid, Let there be Light, and there was Light*, is nothing but a *Hebraiſm*, and has no other meaning or force than if he had ſaid; God created the Light, by his Word. As this Expreſſion, which is ſo com-

mon and ſo natural in the *Hebrew* Tongue, is rarely us'd in the *Greek*, unleſs by way of Figure, 'twas a ſlippery Place for *Longinus*, and he might eaſily fall into an Error; eſpecially finding it repeated over and over, in the Books which he had ſeen, and which render'd this Paſſage ſomewhat otherwiſe than *Moſes* wrote it: *Let there be Light, and there was Light.* This Repetition, I ſay, which is often Rhetorical among the *Greeks*, but is not ſo among the *Hebrews*, ſeem'd to *Longinus* to be made on Purpoſe; for, according to *Quintilian*, Repetition alone makes a Figure. And even the Interrogation, which goes before it; *God ſaid, What? Let there be Light:* This Interrogation, I ſay, which is none of *Moſes*'s, exciting, as it does, the Reader's Attention, and preparing his Mind to hear ſomething conſiderable, and being out of the common Track of Language, might ſeem to him to proceed from Art. 'Tis to no Purpoſe for ſome to pretend, that this *What* is not put down there as coming from *Moſes*, and making part of the Paſſage he reports, but that he put it down as coming from himſelf. What Good cou'd this Interrogation do? If the pretended Sublimity of the Paſſage conſiſted purely in theſe Words, *Let there be Light*, we may believe, he was willing to awaken thereby the Reader's Mind, in order to make him the better underſtand them. But if, according to the Opinion of our Adverſaries, this Sublime conſiſts in the lively Expreſſion of the Creature's Obedience to the Voice of the Creator, he enlarges as much upon what precedes the Interrogation, as upon what follows it, and therefore it had been very improperly plac'd there by *Longinus*; beſides that, it is not his Cuſtom to take thoſe Liberties with the Authors he quotes. In all the Paſſages with which his Work is fill'd, he gives their naked Words without intermingling any Thing of his own. And therefore we may ſay, that conſidering he went according

to the Words of *Moſes*, as alter'd and miſreported, his Judgment of them is excuſable. But it is inſupportable, if it reſult from what *Moſes* did actually ſay; and 'twas this Original which M. *Deſpreaux* ought to have conſulted.

[*And ſo, it ſeems, he did, much more than the Lection of* Longinus, *ſince in the Citation of* Moſes's *Paſſage, he has put away the* What? *I am ſurpriz'd, that neither* He *ſhou'd take any notice of it in his Notes, nor our Prelate reprimand him for ſuch Omiſſion; for, in ſhort, as he very well obſerves, this* What *throws the Sublime upon the ſucceeding Words only, whereas 'tis pretended, that it no leſs conſiſts in theſe Words,* and God ſaid. *It is not fair to retrench any Thing in tranſlating a Paſſage of this Nature, for ſo the Tranſlator makes the Author ſay, not what he does ſay, but what he ſhou'd have ſaid forſooth.*]

There are Expreſſions in Holy Scripture, which have been deem'd Figurative and Sublime, and which, in their Original, are by no means ſo. One of the moſt polite Writers of this Age has rankt among theſe, that Paſſage of the firſt Book of *Maccabees*, where it is ſaid, *That the Earth was ſilent before* Alexander; taking this Silence for a Metaphorical Expreſſion of the Submiſſion, which the ſubjugated World paid that Conqueror; and this for want of knowing, that the Origin of this way of ſpeaking comes from a *Hebrew* Word, ſignifying *to be ſilent, to repoſe and be in Peace.* It were eaſy to produce many Examples of this: So that what appear'd Sublime in our *Language* and the *Latin*, is, in the *Hebrew*, nothing but a ſimple and ordinary Phraſe. So likewiſe in that ſame Book of *Maccabees*, are theſe Words, *Et ſiluit terra dies paucos; & ſiluit terra annis duobus*, where the *Greek* has it, ἡσυχασεν, *was in Peace:* As alſo in St. *Luke*, when it is ſaid, that the Women of *Galilee Sabbatho ſiluerunt*, to ſignify that they reſted on the Sabbath. The

Reader will judge whether theſe Expreſſions are Sublime.

'Tis plainly a *Hebraiſm*, for in *Hebrew* they ſay שקטה ארצ *Schaketah erets* ; the Land was ſilent, to intimate that it reſted. See *Joſ.* XI. 23. I will not deny that *David* ſpoke figuratively, when he ſaid of God (*Pſalm* XXXIII. 9.) *For he ſpake and it was done; he commanded and it ſtood faſt.* This is the true Senſe of the Original. And the whole Texture of this *Pſalm*, enrich'd with ſo many and ſuch noble lofty Figures, ſufficiently ſhew what we ought to think of this Expreſſion, and it likewiſe carries in it ſelf the Marks of the Sublime: for in ſaying that God *ſpake*, without adding what, and that what he ſpake *was done*, the Prophet gives no Limits to the Reader's Imagination, but, with two Words, makes him range over the whole Heaven and Earth, and all the mighty Works of the Creator. He then makes a ſort of Gradation, and from a ſimple Word he paſſes to a Command, to ſhew the infinite Power of that Word, and the Sovereignty of God. When he adds to this Command, *it ſtood faſt*, without ſaying what ſtood faſt ; (whether he meant to recal the Memory of the Miracle which was wrought at the Battle of *Gabaon*, when the Sun ſtood ſtill, or whether he alludes to the abſolute Power which God continually has over his Creatures, to keep them in reſt or in motion, to create them and preſerve them ;) the Prophet, I ſay, determining nothing, carries our Mind ev'n to Infinity, and that is what deſerves the Name of Sublime.

[*It is certain, there's a great deal of Difference between a ſimple Narration, ſuch as the beginning of* Geneſis, *and a* Canticle, *ſuch as this* Pſalm, *quoted here by M.* Huet. *What's Simple in the one, becomes Sublime in the other, by the Senſe that is given to it. For Example, the Pſalmiſt ſays,* Verſe 6. By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made : And all the Hoſt of them, by

by the breath of his Mouth. *It is viſible theſe Expreſſions are Sublime, not only becauſe they are ſo in themſelves, but becauſe they are inſerted in a* Canticle. As *for* Verſe 9. *I ſhou'd think it ought to be tranſlated.* He ſpake, and the World was; he commanded, and it preſented it ſelf to him; *in* Latin, Dixit & Orbis fuit, imperavit, & ſe ei ſtitit; *for the Verb* Jahamod, *refers to the Creature, or to the Word* Thebel, *which is the laſt of the foregoing Verſe, and which ſignifies the* World. *So St.* Jerome *underſtood it, in his Verſion from the* Hebrew; *his Words are theſe,* Quia ipſe dixit & factus eſt (*Orbis*) ipſo præcipiente, ſtetit.] *M.* Huet *goes on,*

Again, in order to judge better of the Paſſage of *Moſes,* we muſt make another ſort of Diſtinction of the ſeveral kinds of Sublime, than what *Longinus* has done, and muſt eſtabliſh four Kinds, which being well underſtood, will make an entire Deciſion of our Diſpute; the Sublime of Words, the Sublime of Phraſe, the Sublime of Thoughts, and the Sublime of Things. *The Sublime of Words* is an Elevation of Diſcourſe, which conſiſts only in the Choice of beautiful and ſonorous Words, which yet contain nothing but a common Thought; and ſome are of Opinion, this Kind does not properly deſerve the Name of Sublime. *The Sublime of Phraſe, or of the Turn of Expreſſion,* ariſes from the marſhaling and diſpoſing of Words, which ſet in a certain Order, ſhake the Soul, and which on the contrary, remaining in their natural Order, leave it without any Emotion. *The Sublime of Thoughts,* proceeds immediately from the Mind, and makes its way to our Perception of it ſelf, provided it be not weaken'd, either by the meanneſs of the Words, or their ill Diſpoſition. As for the *Sublime of Things,* it ſolely depends upon the Grandeur and Dignity of the Subject treated of; without any occaſion for Artifice in the Speaker, to make it appear as great as it is. Thus any Man that can but

relate any Thing of Grandeur, juſt as it is, without Diminution or Addition; however unpolite or ignorant he may be in other Reſpects, he may with Juſtice be reckon'd truly Sublime in his Diſcourſe, but not that Sublime which *Longinus* teaches. There are few *Rhetoricians*, but acknowledge theſe four Kinds of Sublime; but they do not agree in the manner of diſtinguiſhing and defining them. Of theſe four Sublimes, 'tis evident, that the three firſt are of the Juriſdiction of the Orator, and depend upon Precepts, but that Nature alone has Pretenſions to the laſt, excluſive of Art; and conſequently when *Longinus*, by Profeſſion a *Rhetorician*, gave Rules for the Sublime, it was not for this laſt Kind of Sublime, which was not within his Sphere; ſince what is naturally Great is always Great, and will appear ſo to them who ſhall conſider it as it is in it ſelf.

This being granted, if we apply this Diſtinction of the Sublime to the Paſſage of *Moſes*, it will ſoon be ſeen, that the Sublime of Words is not there, ſince the Words are common Words. Nor is the Sublime of Phraſe there: ſince I have made appear, that the Words are diſpos'd in ſuch a Manner as is very ordinary in the Books of *Moſes*, and in all Books of the *Hebrews*, Ancient and Modern, and that it is a turn of their Language, and not of their Rhetoric. Nor can it be ſaid, that it contains any Sublimity of Thought, for where wou'd the Thought be found? Therefore what ſtrikes us, and gives us an Emotion, in reading thoſe Words of *Moſes*, is the Sublime of the very Thing expreſs'd by thoſe Words. When we hear that the ſole Voice of the Lord drew Light from the Abyſs of Nothing, ſo ſurprizing a Truth has a mighty effect upon the Mind, and the Sacred Hiſtorian being very ſenſible, that whatever he ſhou'd add of his own, wou'd but obſcure the Luſtre of it, he coucht it in Terms ſimple and vulgar, and gave it no other turn than what was common and familiar in his Language;

Language; like a skilful Lapidary, who being to inchaſe ſome precious Stone that is without fault, uſes but one Gold-twiſt to environ and faſten it, without robbing the beholder's Eyes of any of its Beauty; well knowing, that what he ſhou'd add, wou'd be inferior to that which he ſhou'd hide; and that the great Art is to have no Art: Whereas, when he is to ſet a Jewel that has ſome fault, he uſes a contrary Cunning, and dextrouſly covers with Gold and Enamel, the Flaw which might leſſen the value of it. This Sublime of Things is the true Sublime; the Sublime of Nature, the Original Sublime; the reſt are only ſo by Imitation and Art. The Sublime of Things has its own Sublimity in it ſelf, the others but borrow it from without. The firſt does not impoſe upon the Mind; what it repreſents as great, is really ſo. On the contrary, the Sublime of Art lays Snares for the Mind, and is only made uſe of to give an Appearance to what has no Being, or to make it appear bigger than it is. Therefore the Sublime which *Longinus* and his Followers fancy to be in this Paſſage before us, does Honour to *Moſes*, I confeſs, but an Honour which he deſpis'd. The Sublime, which I fancy in it does Honour to the Work of God, and this is what *Moſes* himſelf propos'd. In this View it was, that *Chalcidius* the *Platonic*, in reporting the beginning of *Geneſis*, has ſaid, that *Moſes*, who is the Author of it, was not ſupported and animated with a human Eloquence; but that God himſelf put Words into his Mouth and inſpir'd him. That Philoſopher did not, like *Longinus*, find in the Diſcourſe of *Moſes*, the Paint of the School, and the Diſguiſes invented by human Wit; but he perceiv'd therein the fructifying Voice of God, who is Spirit and Life it ſelf.

But this is not the ſole and principal Fault, which I find in the Judgment which *Longinus* has made of the Paſſage in queſtion. When he ſaid

theſe Words; *God ſaid, Let there be Light, and there was Light*, in endeavouring to raiſe the Beauty of that Expreſſion, he debaſes the Grandeur of God, and has evinced, that neither the lowneſs of human Wit, nor the Elevation of the Divine Majeſty, were ſufficiently known to him. He was ignorant, that our Conceptions, and our Words were too ſhort to reach the Infinite Heigth of the Wiſdom of God, whoſe Riches never enter'd into the Heart of Man, and which are incomprehenſible to it. When God commanded his Prophets to publiſh his Myſteries, one repreſented to him, that he was of uncircumcis'd Lips, another told him that he wanted Speech; and all own'd themſelves inferior to the Dignity of that Employment.

This alone ſufficiently demonſtrates the Error of thoſe who believe, that the Sublime of this Paſſage conſiſts in that the Act of the Will of God is thereby repreſented to us as a Word. Tho' Men have but very low and very groſs Ideas of God's Greatneſs, yet their Expreſſions are below their Ideas. Not being able to raiſe themſelves up to Him, they bring Him down to them, and ſpeak of Him as of a Man. They give him a Face, Mouth, Eyes, Ears, Feet, and Hands. They make Him ſit, walk, ſpeak; they aſcribe human Paſſion to him, Joys, Deſire, Repentance, Wrath. Nay, they gave Him Wings and make him fly. Is this knowing the Power of God, according to his Dignity? Is this expreſſing it as it ought to be? And dare we give the Name of Sublime to a Diſcourſe, which infinitely depreciates and diſhonours its Subject? In ſhort, if it be a Sublime Expreſſion to ſay that God ſpake, which of the Prophets cou'd not furniſh us with a thouſand Examples, like that which *Longinus* has quoted out of *Moſes*? Do not thoſe very Prophets give the Name of Speech to the Judgments which we inwardly make of Things, either for or againſt; and what

what is the outward oral Speech, but an Image of the inward Speech of the Underſtanding? *Moſes* therefore expreſs'd himſelf like a Philoſopher, and not like a Rhetorician, when he ſaid, that God created the Light by his Word.

[*It cannot be deny'd, That theſe Reflections of M.* Huet *are very Curious, very exact, and very Juſt. There's nothing ſo true, as our having but a very imperfect Idea of the Deity, and ſuch as is infinitely Inferior to the reality, whatever Care we have taken to purify our Reaſon by Study, and whatever Efforts we uſe to raiſe our ſelves above Vulgar Errors. It is ev'n in this Caſe moſt certain, that when we go about to convey our Notions into the Minds of others, by the Inſtrument of Speech, we do nothing but employ Metaphorical Expreſſions, the greateſt Part whereof are borrow'd from corporeal Things, becauſe there are none other. Thus, in ſtrictneſs, Men are leſs able to ſpeak of the Deity in a Sublime Manner, than they are to form a Notion of it anſwerable to the immenſe Original; tho' it is as impoſſible to come near it, as to exhauſt Infinity. All the Efforts of Men wou'd be to no Purpoſe, but to deceive others and themſelves, if we imagin'd, that we cou'd ſpeak of Him in a Manner* expreſſive of his Grandeur and Power according to his Dignity, *as* Longinus *words it. God did not even to the Prophets make himſelf known any farther than as their Weakneſs admitted, and in ſuch a manner as was proportion'd to the narrow-mindedneſs of thoſe to whom he ſent thoſe Holy Men. Otherwiſe if God had pleas'd to have manifeſted himſelf in a manner above our Capacity, it wou'd have been of no Uſe to us. 'Tis for that reaſon, we ſee in the Scripture an infinite Number of Expreſſions which the Divines call* Anthropopathies, *i. e. Deſcriptions of Divine Things by Metaphors taken from Things Human: And which are very far from lifting up our Minds to a Knowledge, that may bear any Proportion with the Eternal Grandeur of the Deity.*

*And*

*And yet we ſometimes ſay, that others have ſpoken in a Sublime Manner of God; without conſidering that we have neither any Ideas or Words, but what infinitely leſſen him. But this Sublime ought to be underſtood in reference to our Weakneſs; and we ſay a Lauguage is Noble, when it is above that which is commonly us'd; and by which eminent Genius's have endeavour'd to raiſe our Minds, as much as they cou'd above vulgar Ideas. But it muſt be always remember'd, that thoſe Men whom we moſt admire, have been all lock'd up within the Bounds of Human Nature, which 'tis impoſſible for the Children of* Adam *ever to go beyond, in this Life. Underſtandings of the firſt Order, among us, are undoubtedly very vulgar, in compariſon to the Intelligences which are ſuperior to our Nature, and there is ſtill an infinite Diſtance between the moſt exalted Intelligences and the Deity. And therefore 'tis very improperly ſaid, that ſuch a Man has ſpoken of the Deity in a Sublime Manner, which Expreſſion, as likewiſe all of the like Kind, ſhould be underſtood relatively to us.*

Homer, *who, as* Longinus *obſerves, in the Chapter wherein are the Words now examin'd, deſcribes the Gods like Men, and ſometimes even like Beings more unhappy than Men, does at other Times ſoar as high as he can to ſpeak of them in a loftier Strain; but he does not in all Things ſatisfy even* Longinus; *and there where he does beſt, and where that* Rhetorician *thinks him Sublime, he is infinitely ſhort of the Ideas of the Philoſophers; as thoſe who ſhall peruſe that Chapter will agree. And therefore that* Rhetorician *was no very penetrating Judge in a Queſtion of this kind,* viz. *Whether an Expreſſion is worthy of God, or not.*

*I may likewiſe ſay, that M.* Huet, *in his Reflections on thoſe different kinds of Sublime, has very well anſwer'd what M.* Tollius *advanc'd againſt him, in his Notes on* Longinus, *and which for that Reaſon, I ſhall omit here.*

If

*If therefore ſome will yet have it, that the Legiſlator of the* Jews, *who indeed was no ordinary Man,* having very well conceiv'd the Greatneſs and Power of God, has duly expreſs'd it according to its Dignity, *it muſt be underſtood with reſpect to the impotence of Human Nature, to which the Revelation he receiv'd from Heav'n, was neceſſarily to be proportion'd. We ought to form to our ſelves the greateſt and moſt magnificent Idea of the Deity we poſſibly can, and yet be cautious how we fancy we come near that incomprehenſible Original. To act otherwiſe, is to act like the vulgar Herd; and not to ſuffer our ſelves to be better inform'd, is to deſire to continue among the ignorant and conceited Populace.*]

It is now eaſy to ſee, whether M. *Deſpreaux*'s Cenſure be well-grounded. It is, in ſhort, making the Difference between us a Point of Religion, and accuſing me of a kind of Impiety, for denying, That *Moſes* made uſe of the Sublime in the Paſſage now under Diſpute. But this is aſſerted without Proof, and is begging the Queſtion. If it be contrary to good Senſe to ſay, that this Paſſage is Sublime, as I think I have demonſtrated; it is ridiculous to ſay, that not to ſpeak againſt good Senſe, is to wound Religion. The Second Proof turns upon the New Tranſlators of *Geneſis*, who have confirm'd his Opinion. But it is viſible, That M. *Deſpreaux* does not vouch them ſo much for the weight, he thought their Opinion might carry in this Caſe; as to pay the Debt of Compliments, they had laid upon him by their reporting that Paſſage. Since therefore this Cenſure is founded upon nothing, but the Magiſterial Air with which it is deliver'd; I fancy I have a right to Anſwer in my turn, What ſhall we ſay of a Man, who, tho' he had the Advantage of the Goſpel Light, has preſum'd to repreſent *Moſes* as a wretched *Rhetorician*, and maintain'd, that he made uſe of unneceſſary Figures in his Hiſtory, and diſguis'd under ſuperfluous Ornaments, a Matter exceedingly

ceedingly Beautiful and Rich of it ſelf? What ſhall we ſay of that Man, who is Ignorant, that the Excellency, the Energy, and the Merit of the Holy Scripture does not conſiſt in the Richneſs of its Figures, nor in the Sublimity of its Language? *non in Sublimitate Sermonis aut Sapientiæ, non in perſuaſibilibus Humanæ Sapientiæ verbis; ſed in Oſtenſione Spiritus & Virtutis; ut fides noſtra non ſit in Sapientia Hominum ſed Virtute Dei*; and knows not, that neither the Elevation, nor the Simplicity of the Sacred Volumes are the Marks which diſcover their being dictated by the Holy Ghoſt, ſince St. *Auſtin* was of Opinion, That it was indifferent, whether the Scripture Language were Polite or Barbarous. Who is ſo ignorant, as not to know, That St. *Paul* was no Maſter in the Artifices of Rhetorick, and that he was *imperitus Sermonis* *; that *Moſes* had an Impediment in his Speech; that the Prophet *Amos* was rude and unpolite; and that all the Holy Perſonages, tho' ſpeaking different Languages, were however inſpir'd with the ſame Spirit.

To conclude, I appeal to your Lordſhip for Judgment. Your natural Penetration, and your being ſo much converſant in the ſacred Books, will enable you to determine this Queſtion. Whatever Compliment M. *Deſpreaux* has paid you in the laſt Edition of his Works, his Praiſes cannot hinder you from holding the Scales even, and preſerving that Equity between us, which you ſo religiouſly obſerve in every Thing. For my Part, I ſhall abide by your Lordſhip's Deciſion, with no leſs Reſpect and Submiſſion than I have always been

*Yours*, &c.

*Paris*, 26 March, 1683.

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* 2 Epiſt. Corinth. Chap. 13. ver. 6.

*I have*

*I have had no account of the Conſequences of this Quarrel, and have purpoſely forborn any perſonal Reflections. I thought M.* Huet's *Diſſertation worthy to be publiſh'd, and have given it juſt as it came to my Hands without any Alteration, except putting M.* Deſpreaux's *Name at length, which was only mark'd with Stars, becauſe he himſelf had put it ſo in the laſt Edition of his Works. He ſeems not to have alter'd his Opinion, ſince, what he had ſaid of the Biſhop of* Avranches, *is continued in that Edition with little or no Alteration. However that be, a Man may, upon this Occaſion, differ from M.* Deſpreaux, *without detracting from the Reputation he juſtly deſerves.*

JOHN *Le* CLERC.

*N. B.* The Curious, who are deſirous of ſeeing M. *Boileau*'s Anſwer to this *Diſſertation*, may find it in his Works. Tranſlated into *Engliſh* by ſeveral Hands. In Three Volumes Octavo.

*FINIS.*

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